THE KILLING FIELDS: WILLIAM VOLLMANN IN CAMBODIA

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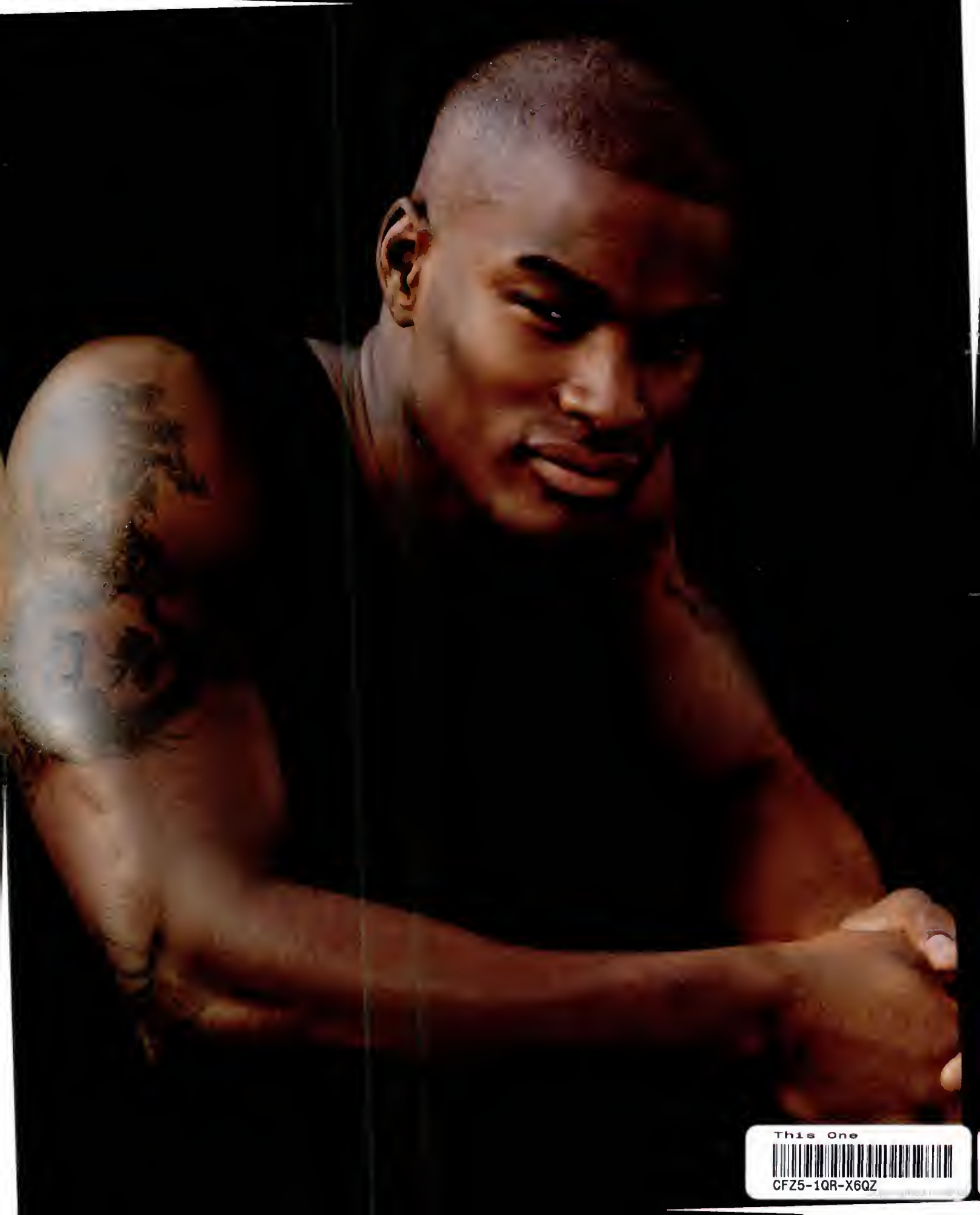

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Printed in the U.S.A.
SPIN is published by Camouflage Associates.
Chairman of the Board: Stephan C. Swid
President: Bob Guccione, Jr.
Vice Chairman and Executive Publisher: David H. Horowitz

For questions about new or current subscriptions, call (800) 829-9093. To change your address, send both old and new addresses to SPIN, P.O. Box 420193, Palm Coast, FL 32142-0193. Allow six to eight weeks for processing.

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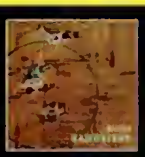

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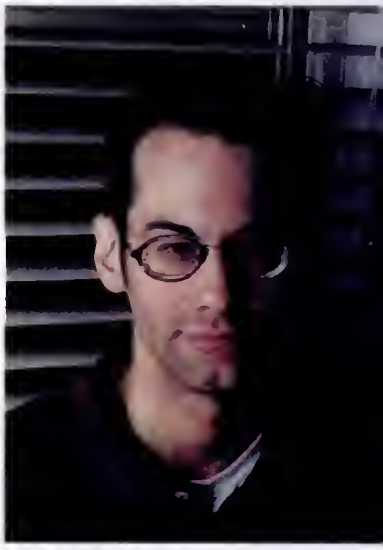

Reporting on the San Francisco Bay Area's hyperactive DIY hip-hop movement ["Turning the Tables"], Senior Contributing Writer **Charles Aaron,** right, was struck by the local playas' lack of concern for industry approval. "These kids have given up on getting signed," Aaron says, "so instead, groups like the Invisible Scratch Pickles are doing the wildest, strangest things they can think of to impress their friends and push the music forward." Though DJ Shadow is currently the biggest name on the scene, Aaron found he's just as down-to-earth as his peers. "We were talking at a coffeehouse," Aaron laughs, "and Shadow kept worrying that we were disturbing some college kids who were trying to study."

Photographer **Stephane Sednaoui,** below, and U2 agreed that only a cool, futuristic feel would capture the spirit of the band's newfound embrace of electronica on their latest album, *Pop* ["The Future Sound of U2"]. "They are very sweet, but they think about their visual image in the same way they consider their music," says Sednaoui. "They will not stop until the idea in their heads comes out perfect." Sednaoui, who also directed the band's "Mysterious Ways" video, adds that he and the band once worked 24 hours straight—"like madmen." When he's not filming the Red Hot Chili Peppers ("Give It Away") or Alanis Morissette ("Ironic"), Sednaoui shoots for *Interview* and *The Face.*

Though photographer **Roxanne Lowit** assumed the Indian-American club kids recruited for the fashion spread "Gimme Hindi Rock" would be a bunch of wild things, she soon discovered that many of them are caught between hip youth culture and traditional ways. "It's a world where turbans and cell phones coexist," she says. "One of the girls I photographed said, 'I can't have a boy hug me in a picture. My mother will kill me!' " Lowit's photos have also appeared in *Vogue, Vanity Fair,* and *Allure.*

Journalists have been searching for the elusive Khmer Rouge leader Pol Pot for almost 20 years, but Staff Writer **William T. Vollman** braved land mines and the Cambodian civil war in a determined but unsuccessful quest to bring the man responsible for the deaths of more than one million people out of hiding ["Holiday in Cambodia"]. "A contact said Pol Pot just laughs and laughs at all the rumors that he's dead," Vollman says. "I wanted to look at his face and hear his justification for mass murder." Vollman is the author of ten books, including *The Atlas,* published by Viking last year.

JENNIFER JESSEE

"The only devilish thing Marilyn Manson did during our interviews ["Our Little Satan"] was when he borrowed my rental car," says Production Editor **Jeffrey Rotter,** above. "He got a parking ticket and didn't tell me—he buried it under some stuff in the backseat." Rotter is also co–music editor of SPINonline.

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TOPSPIN

by Dennis Cooper

Altared State

Same-sex marriage should be legal—but can't gays and lesbians come up with something better?

SHOULD LESBIAN AND GAY couples have the right to get married? Of course. Most people reading this issue of SPIN probably think, *Sure, why not?* however dispassionately. I'm not saying there aren't homophobes in the alternative rock scene, God knows. The point is—and correct me if I'm wrong—same-sex marriage just isn't a very threatening idea in the grand scheme of things. In fact, compared to the antics of, say, Marilyn Manson or Hole or Imperial Teen or Nick Cave or any number of bands and artists who regularly tweak our notions of what constitutes moral and immoral behavior, same-sex marriage is a rather fusty concept. It's not a life or death issue, not a First Amendment issue. It's just one of those minor legal upgrades that's bound to happen at some point, because there is no good reason why it shouldn't. The controversy swirling around the issue seems fit for the tabloids, akin to the kind of passions aroused by the question of whether Princess Di is a saint or a slut.

The real question is why this simple twist on something so old-fashioned is such a big deal, both for the lesbians and gay men who insist upon being married, and for the people who appear to be thunderstruck by the prospect. The stumbling block, of course, is Christianity, whose core believers see same-sex marriage as one more sign that their stranglehold on America's ethics is slipping away. Christians are no longer a united, Bible-thumping front, if they ever were. They're a barely definable constituency incorporating everything from televangelist fans who think God's a vengeful spy in the sky to born-again 12-steppers to whom God is merely an amorphous, individualized concept of some higher power that exists purely to keep them clean. Between these two extremes are the vast majority of lazy Christians, people who are believers because it gives them one less thing to worry about. If this majority isn't up in arms about same-sex marriage—and I don't see much evidence that they are—it's probably because they haven't given the idea more than half a thought.

But even the resistance to same-sex marriages among Christianity's hard-core defenders seems self-defeating. To paraphrase a recent letter to the *Los Angeles Times*—written in response to a news story about serial killer Richard Ramirez's prison marriage to a love-struck pen pal—it's okay for the Night Stalker to get married, but not my boyfriend and me?

Christians have always been proselytizers: No heathen is seen as unredeemable, and no sin as unforgivable. They've tried so hard to be all things to all people that it seems downright quirky of them to draw the line at gay marriage, a notion that barely rates a blip on the scale of current cultural upheavals. If this fight goes to court—and thanks to recent, highly publicized struggles to legalize same-sex marriage in Hawaii, that's pretty much a given—Christian conservatives will essentially be pitting their theories of right and wrong against basic principles of human dignity, and making themselves seem paranoid and inhumane in the process.

Another interesting question is why lesbians and gay men want to adopt a ritual that was created to marginalize them. From what I can gather, same-sex fiancés don't want just the appropriate legal papers, they want the whole shebang—altar, choir, and priestly blessing. As a gay man who finds this desire slightly appalling, I'd like to think that they see marriage as a subversive political action, an ambitious twist on our people's longstanding fascination with the idea of passing as straight, or as a member of a gender not our own. But I'm afraid it's less complicated than that. These aspiring queer spouses really do want to be "normal," according to the conventional standards of straight, Christian America.

I should confess that in the early '80s I got married to my boyfriend of the time. Not legally, of course—we asked a friend who was an ordained minister to help us devise a ceremony, invited our friends, and walked down the aisle to the strains of the Velvet Underground's "I'm Sticking With You." Then we exchanged rings, kissed, smashed wedding cake in each other's faces, and had a big, drunken party. My boyfriend, a sweet, troubled guy with a heroin problem, wanted me to prove that I wouldn't give up on him, even if he couldn't kick his habit, and this seemed like the obvious way to cement our union. We took our vows seriously, but his addiction got much worse over the next several months. When he pawned his wedding ring to buy dope, I considered us divorced. I'm very glad our symbolic marriage wasn't legal, because it could end as purely and uncomplicatedly as it began.

I don't understand why same-sex couples aren't interested in finding innovative ways to legitimize their relationships. As eternal outsiders, we have the option to reinvent everything about love, to discover if there is a way to collaborate romantically on a long-term basis without the option of procreating, and without okaying our interactions with the officials of church or state. I don't know why some of us want the same things that heterosexuals have—and in some cases wish they *didn't* have—but some of us do, and in this particular case, it's such a little request. ●

WINSTON SMITH

It happens to everyone. Sooner or later your sedan gene kicks in. The words "sports car" are erased from your mental hard drive and replaced with "four door sedan". This is usually followed by a cold sweat.

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BUSH WHACKED

In his profile of Bush ["Pretty on the Inside," December], James Hannaham alludes to a fundamentally flawed premise that to be a legit rock star in the '90s, one must either be a heroin addict, be demented, or have suffered some great personal loss. Well, Gavin Rossdale blows that theory right out of the water, and it doesn't make him any less of a musician.

ANNE SOWERS
SEAL BEACH, CALIFORNIA

Why rehash what has already been written countless times by other mags? Let's recap: Gavin's father was a doctor, Gavin smokes pot, Gavin's dog's name is Winston, Gavin smokes pot, Gavin's (now ex-) girlfriend's name is Jasmine, Gavin smokes pot, Gavin's a nice guy, and Gavin smokes a *lot* of pot. Next time, how about trying something different, like asking Gavin, "Do you prefer homegrown or imported?" Or maybe, "Do you like it rolled, in a pipe, or from a bong?"

TERRI BUISO
SMITHTOWN, NEW YORK

FAIRE PLAY

As someone who has worked for several Renaissance Faires around the country, I can assure you that the majority of "rennies" are not, as Elizabeth Gilbert claims, social outcasts who grew up playing Dungeons & Dragons ["Knight Fever," December]. Most of us are professional actors, and if we're tolerant of the patrons who forget the village isn't real, it's because our job is to entertain, not to condemn.

KIMBERLY MORGAN
GARDEN CITY, MICHIGAN

I'm a frequent patron of the New York Renaissance Festival as well as a proud member of the wenches guild, and I don't think Elizabeth Gilbert could have been any more derogatory towards the town of Sloatsburg or the Faire's patrons. But, hey, what do I know? According to the article, I'm just a dumb rennie.

ROBIN A. PERREIRA
VIA INTERNET

COLOR ME IMPRESSED

December's Fashion article, "It's a Colorful Life," was hilarious. I could get a jacket for $1 at the local thrift shop that looks just like the $1,965 one you pictured.

ERIN HENRY
CENTRAL BRIDGE, NEW YORK

TRASH TALKING

I was glad to see Robin Bakay's article on Scott Ferrall [Out of Bounds, December]. About six months ago, my local sports station changed formats, so i no longer get *Ferrall on the Bench* on the radio, but his ragged-out, assault-weapon voice still rings in my head. As Ferrall himself would say, "He's the man."

JEFF ROZDILSKY
LOMBARD, ILLINOIS

AIR SICK

Thank you for Terese Svoboda's excellent and all-too-accurate article on the devastating effects of indoor pollution at the EPA's headquarters in Washington, D.C. It's ironic that the protectors of our nation's environment stonewalled while so many of its employees were sickened by toxic exposures. The

SCHOERNER

tragedy is that nearly a decade later, the number of people nationwide who fall sick and are subsequently disabled because of similar exposures is increasing all the time.

MARY LAMIELLE
DIRECTOR
NATIONAL CENTER FOR ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH STRATEGIES
VOORHEES, NEW JERSEY

TANGLED WEB

So, some psychologists have determined that spending six hours a day on the Internet is "far beyond the norm." [Exposure, December]. What would be more normal? Spending that time watching TV?

BEN HARRIS
BURBANK, CALIFORNIA

DIRT MERCHANTS

Rock on, Jerry Brown. How long *will* it take for us to realize that the environment is choking in our wake [Topspin, December]? Let's face it: We are selfish goons who just want to go shopping.

SUSANNAH DOWELL
MONKTON, MARYLAND

Jerry Brown is undoubtedly an intelligent and sincere individual, and without question the California redwoods should be preserved. But to start an essay focusing on worldwide human grief and then abruptly shift to saving the redwoods is bewilderingly anticlimactic.

WILLIAM DAUENHAUER
WICKLIFFE, OHIO

LISA SAYS

Thanks for the article on Lisa Germano ["Pop Therapy," December]. I'm glad there are female songwriters out there who can turn the shit life gives them into something beautiful.

JOLENE MIKLAS
PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA

BEAUTY AND THE BEASTS

Thanks for the article on guys and makeup [Exposure, December]. Just because girls started wearing makeup first doesn't mean guys can't get a fair shot at it!

DANIELLE CONRAD
NORTH BABYLON, NEW YORK

GENIUS BY ASSOCIATION

The only thing decent about SPIN is Sean Landers's "Genius Lessons." The rest of the magazine is a bunch of crap about rock stars and what they're "really like." No offense, but Landers deserves better than this.

LINDSAY LEVINE
VIA INTERNET

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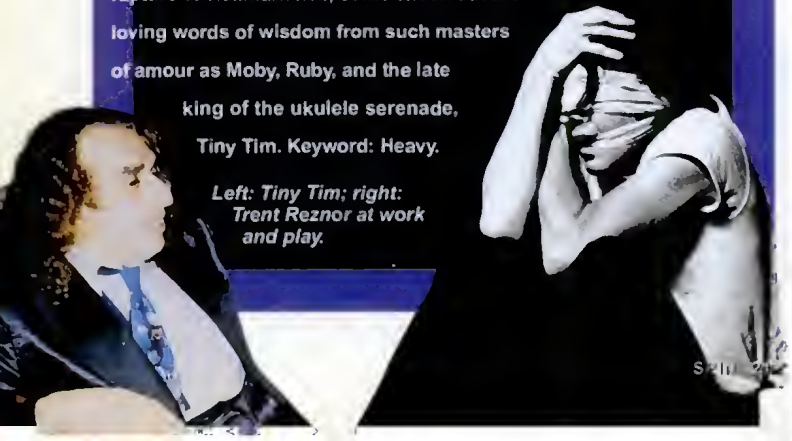
SPINONLINE

BOW DOWN BEFORE THE ONE YOU SERVE Going through Nine Inch Nails withdrawal? We're here to help. SPINonline recently spoke with Trent Reznor about the dark corner in which he's been hiding, the Marilyn Manson recording sessions, and the status of his upcoming album. For the latest words from the prince of darkness, go to keyword: Heavy.

WHERE IS THE LOVE? Whether you think Valentine's Day is joyous rapture or Hallmark hell, come check out the loving words of wisdom from such masters of amour as Moby, Ruby, and the late king of the ukulele serenade, Tiny Tim. Keyword: Heavy.



Left: Tiny Tim; right: Trent Reznor at work and play.

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Sex and the Single Girls The problem

faceless Brit-boy pop. The solution: Spice Girls, five anti-divas who do it for themselves. Photograph by Rankin.

"ALL GIRLS' POO smells of roses," declares Geri, the flame-haired motormouth of Spice Girls, emerging from the toilet of a swank Manhattan hotel. Camped out in the lobby, yammering simultaneously in breathless British accents and screeching into bursts of spontaneous song, Geri and her colleagues seem less like newly anointed U.K. pop aristocracy and more like a bunch of raucous, drunk chicks going nuts on vacation. But the ingrained ordinariness of this girl-next-door group is what—in their boy-band-dominated homeland, at least—makes them downright revolutionary.

"If you wannabe my lover, you got to get with my friends," runs the chorus of "Wannabe," the Spice statement of intent and unity that won the hearts and allowances of several continents last summer. An estrogen-fueled piece of pop-soul, packed with enough barefaced cheek to identify its makers as a kind of DIY TLC, "Wannabe" was the sound of a bunch of determinedly regular girls exulting in their own company and their own gender. "It's all about girl power!" exclaims Mel B., the black Spice Girl with the exploding frizz and the honking laugh. "It's about equality and having fun and trying to rule your life."

"Though some people thought it was about group sex," points out Geri.

Three years ago, the individual girls—Geri, Mel C., Mel B., Emma, and Victoria—were a quintet of showbiz hopefuls bouncing around from auditions for everything from *Cats* to soap commercials. Then serendipity stepped in. Separately, all five answered an advertisement placed by a manager bent on manufacturing a distaff equivalent of the smooth-skinned boy-toys splattered over the U.K. pop charts. The girls bought the concept but seized the means of production. With their debut, *Spice*, now out in the U.S., they became the first all-girl group in Britpop history to truly speak to an all-girl audience. Teenagers were quick to empathize with a group that doesn't sing, dance, dress, or look any better than they do, and soon the question "Who's your favorite Spice Girl?" triggered heated debate, with fans slugging it out over the supremacy of the Loud One, the Sexy One, the Sweet One, the Quiet One, or the Mad One.

Spice Girls' U.K. success story became complete when their homeland's notoriously ravenous tabloids started nosing around in their closets. The first skeleton to come clattering out was Geri's past as a nude model. Fittingly for a girl who claims Margaret Thatcher and Madonna ("I admire what she's achieved being mediocre") as major influences, Geri (the Loud One) is pragmatic about the publication of her early work. "I don't think it was a big deal," she explains. "At the time, I wanted to get my tits out and go running naked in the woods. Nobody's fucking perfect, are they?"

"Except me," chimes in Emma, who is, after all, the Sweet One.

JONATHAN BERNSTEIN

Absolutely fab five: Spice Girls; from left, Geri, Mel C., Mel B., Emma, and Victoria.

Off the Grid Vondie Curtis Hall outs the agony and irony of kicking tomorrow in his dark comedy *Gridlock'd*.

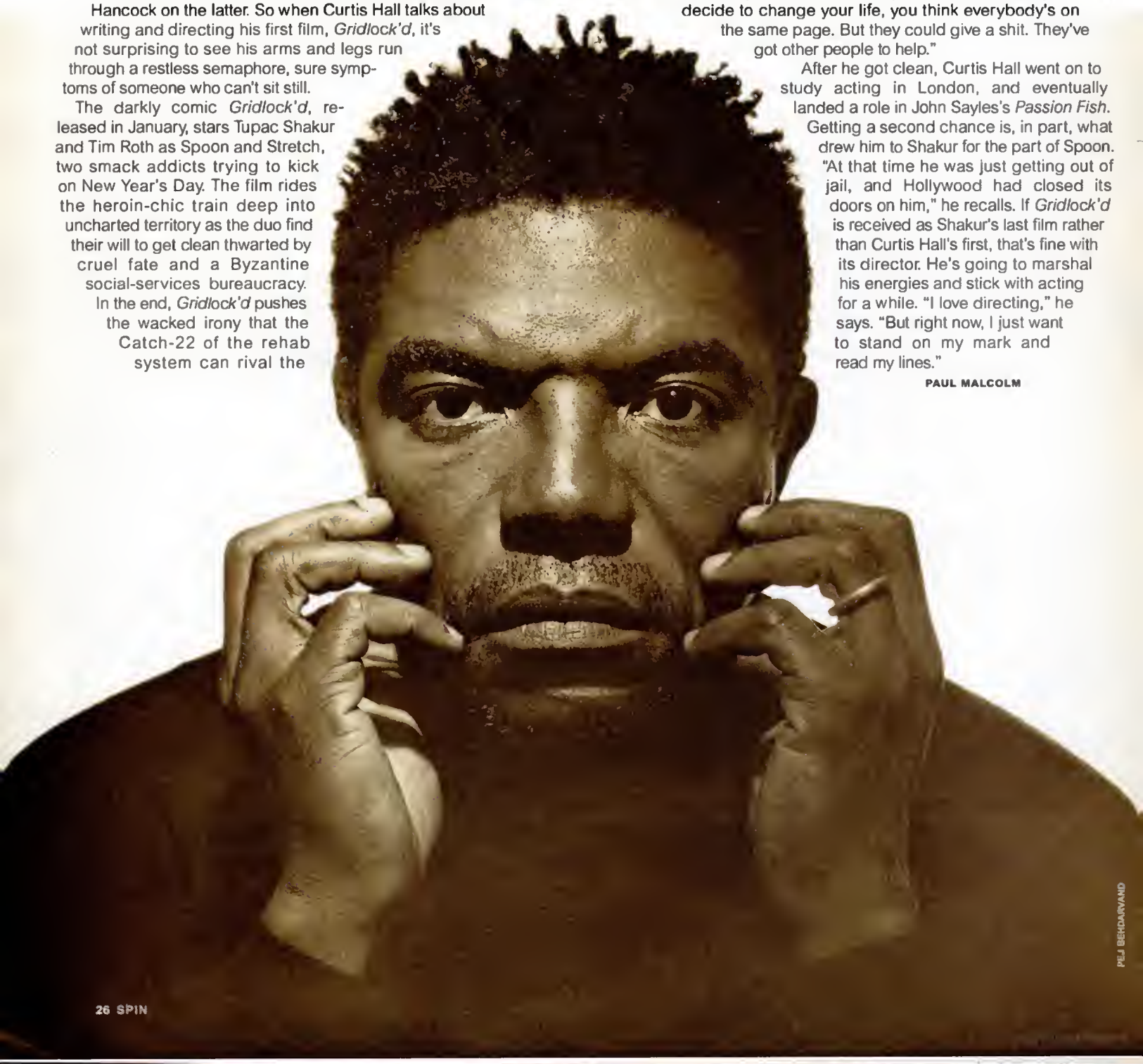
VONDIE CURTIS HALL is a guy with too many outlets. As a musician, he's played in punk and jazz outfits; as an actor, singer, and dancer, he's starred on Broadway and in films; and he's done stints on both *ER* and *Chicago Hope*, appearing on the former as a suicidal transvestite—an Emmy-nominated performance—and playing the righteous Dr. Dennis Hancock on the latter. So when Curtis Hall talks about writing and directing his first film, *Gridlock'd*, it's not surprising to see his arms and legs run through a restless semaphore, sure symptoms of someone who can't sit still.

The darkly comic *Gridlock'd*, released in January, stars Tupac Shakur and Tim Roth as Spoon and Stretch, two smack addicts trying to kick on New Year's Day. The film rides the heroin-chic train deep into uncharted territory as the duo find their will to get clean thwarted by cruel fate and a Byzantine social-services bureaucracy. In the end, *Gridlock'd* pushes the wacked irony that the Catch-22 of the rehab system can rival the ravages of the drug itself.

For Curtis Hall, 40, *Gridlock'd* isn't some genre-based vanity project put together after acting fame hit; it's a story he's been itching to tell ever since he lived it. Growing up in the early '70s in a quiet neighborhood outside Detroit, Curtis Hall and a few pals would head into the city and shoot up with hard-core addicts. One day he brought his habit home and a kid overdosed in his parents' house. "I could only think, 'Fuck, if this guy lives I'll never do this again.' " Curtis Hall started looking into rehab programs, but clinic workers proved less than sympathetic. "When you decide to change your life, you think everybody's on the same page. But they could give a shit. They've got other people to help."

After he got clean, Curtis Hall went on to study acting in London, and eventually landed a role in John Sayles's *Passion Fish*. Getting a second chance is, in part, what drew him to Shakur for the part of Spoon. "At that time he was just getting out of jail, and Hollywood had closed its doors on him," he recalls. If *Gridlock'd* is received as Shakur's last film rather than Curtis Hall's first, that's fine with its director. He's going to marshal his energies and stick with acting for a while. "I love directing," he says. "But right now, I just want to stand on my mark and read my lines."

PAUL MALCOLM



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Jack in the Beat Box

Spring Heel Jack are the new aces of drum'n'bass.

FOR A COUPLE of guys pushing the envelope of drum'n'bass futurism, Spring Heel Jack's John Coxon and Ashley Wales are pretty lackadaisical about technology. "We accidentally erased all the presets in our mixing board's memory," explains Wales, setting up for a gig at D.C.'s 9:30 Club as his publicist frantically cellphones for computer backup. An hour later, the London-based duo ease into a dizzying symphony of warp-speed breakbeats, neoclassical piano, and heaving dub tsunamis, lost data be damned.

Their swooning brand of hardstep is proof that Spring Heel Jack are pulling off what a generation of prog rockers could never accomplish: namely, fastening the outsized emotions of classical music to raw pop hedonism. The duo's first effort, 1995's *There Are Strings*, transcended the usual rhythmic slice-and-dice by looping samples from Lee "Scratch" Perry to Finnish composer Jean Sibelius into tuneful drum'n'bass. Their follow-up, *68 Million Shades*, takes their noirish melodies and sophisticated compositions even further. "Most jungle records are just an intro and a rush of beats," says Coxon, a compact man whose words tumble out like rim shots. "We try to develop things." As Wales puts it, "Most drum'n'bass DJs wouldn't touch our records with a barge pole."

Friends from the mid-'80s when the bloke-ish Wales was a London record-store clerk, the duo first toured out as part of the Spacemen 3 spin-off Spiritualized, with Coxon on guitar and Wales DJing between sets. Their beat-oriented home-taping experiments, initially used for houseparty DJing, got them signed; but it was their work on Everything but the Girl's "Walking Wounded"—arguably jungle's greatest pop moment since Goldie's "Inner City Life" and SHJ's only bout with lyrics—that confirmed their drum'n'bass mastery.

All of which leads to the inevitable question: Can instrumental music truly be pop?

" 'Walk Don't Run,' " Coxon retorts.

" 'Hocus Pocus,' " Wales adds. " 'Outa-Space.' "

True to his record-shop roots, Wales keeps going while Coxon drifts off, attending to some distant sound. "Tinnitus," he explains. "It's this constant *rrrrrmmmm* in my head. My doctor said I had to stop making music." He grins. "So I just work with it. I'm learning to love my tinnitus." WILL HERMES

DEAN CHALKLEY

Well heeled: Ashley Wales, left, and John Coxon.

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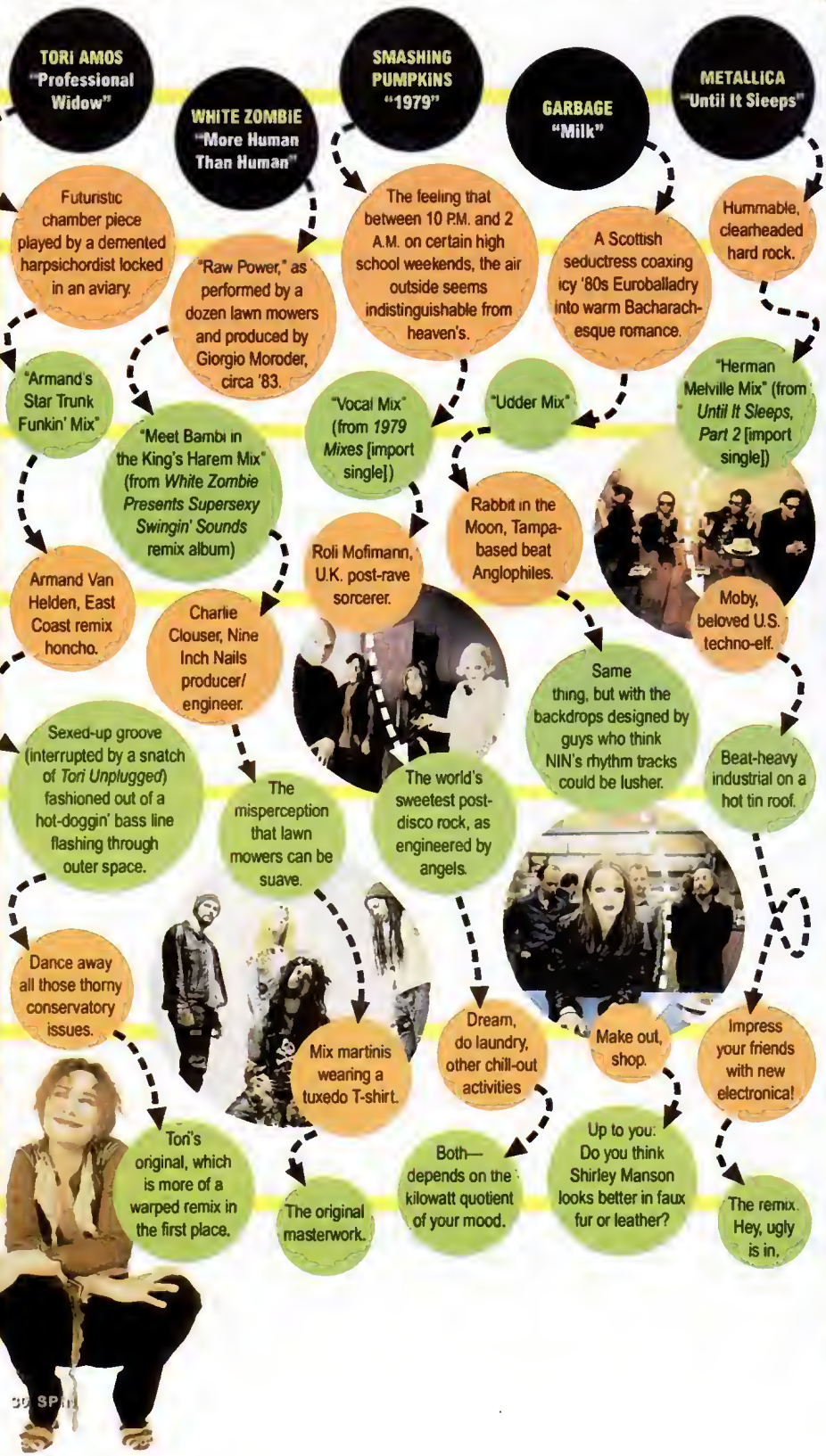
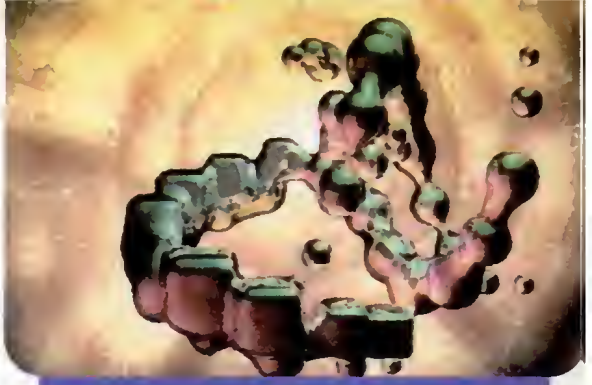
Thump'n'Grind

Alt rockers remix their way into the rhythm nation.

POP MUSIC NOW suffers from a serious case of dance fever. As a result, even chest-thumping guitar men and mystical piano girls have turned into remix disciples, overnighting their tracks to sonic specialists with the know-how and technology to remold vocals, fool with rhythms, and get nearly any song into the groove. But do these things rock? Below, a guide to the latest alt-rock remixes. JAMES HUNTER


TORI AMOS "Professional Widow"
WHITE ZOMBIE "More Human Than Human"
SMASHING PUMPKINS "1979"
GARBAGE "Milk"
METALLICA "Until It Sleeps"
SOUNDS LIKE
Futuristic chamber piece played by a demented harpsichordist locked in an aviary.
"Raw Power," as performed by a dozen lawn mowers and produced by Giorgio Moroder, circa '83.
The feeling that between 10 P.M. and 2 A.M. on certain high school weekends, the air outside seems indistinguishable from heaven's.
A Scottish seductress coaxing icy '80s Euroballadry into warm Bacharach-esque romance.
Hummable, clearheaded hard rock.
REMIX
"Armand's Star Trunk Funkin' Mix"
"Meet Bambi in the King's Harem Mix" (from White Zombie Presents Supersexy Swingin' Sounds remix album)
"Vocal Mix" (from 1979 Mixes [import single])
"Udder Mix"
"Herman Melville Mix" (from Until It Sleeps, Part 2 [import single])
MIX MASTER
Armand Van Helden, East Coast remix honcho.
Charlie Clouser, Nine Inch Nails producer/engineer.
Roli Mofimann, U.K. post-rave sorcerer.
Rabbit in the Moon, Tampa-based beat Anglophiles.
Moby, beloved U.S. techno-elf.
NOW SOUNDS LIKE
Sexed-up groove (interrupted by a snatch of Tori Unplugged) fashioned out of a hot-doggin' bass line flashing through outer space.
The misperception that lawn mowers can be suave.
The world's sweetest post-disco rock, as engineered by angels.
Same thing, but with the backdrops designed by guys who think NIN's rhythm tracks could be lusher.
Beat-heavy industrial on a hot tin roof.
WHAT YOU CAN DO WITH IT
Dance away all those thorny conservatory issues.
Mix martinis wearing a tuxedo T-shirt.
Dream, do laundry, other chill-out activities
Make out, shop.
Impress your friends with new electronica!
WHICH RULES
Tori's original, which is more of a warped remix in the first place.
The original masterwork.
Both—depends on the kilowatt quotient of your mood.
Up to you: Do you think Shirley Manson looks better in faux fur or leather?
The remix. Hey, ugly is in.



Abstract Art

MTV goes electronic with *Amp*.

AFTER YEARS OF tired, by-the-numbers video shows, MTV has finally hit upon the first program worth checking out since the early *120 Minutes*. Called *Amp*, this clip-oriented show, which airs in the wee hours of Friday and Saturday, is a blissful hour's worth of electronica and techno-oriented videos that signals the start of the channel's heavily hyped schedule makeover.

"The way I pitched the show was as a one-hour image campaign," says Todd Mueller, the show's producer. Image is right—this stuff doesn't look like anything MTV has ever put out before. This winter's first installment ranged from crude, homemade spots such as Atari Teenage Riot's "Speed" to slicker futuristic pieces like Orbital's "The Box." Other clips are abstract, computer-generated efforts that eschew human figures, the same way some electronica artists forgo vocals. What you won't see is any "girls dancing in a field, lip-synching to trilly voices" (as Mueller describes some of the lamer submissions he's seen) or some nattering VJ to interfere with the steady stream of eye candy from upcoming crossover acts like the Chemical Brothers and the Prodigy, as well as early electro pioneers Kraftwerk and Brian Eno.

It's debatable whether a TV nation brainwashed by years of semi-plot-driven spots will sit through a video whose main attraction is a morphing colored blob, but Mueller remains optimistic. "It's not prime-time viewing," he explains, "I hope to encourage a more abstract sense of entertainment." TRACEY PEPPER

CJ Bolland's "Sugar Is Sweeter" video. Above, Sun Electric's "Meccano."

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Radical Chic

Washington D.C.'s Make-Up have a theory for everything, including one to shake your money maker.

IAN SVENONIUS JUST quit his job at the sex shop in Georgetown. It seems the lead singer of the funk'n'punk outfit Make-Up couldn't deal with selling handcuffs and butt plugs to wealthy suburban couples. "You realize how totally helpless people must feel if they spend all their time tying each other up," says the lanky 28-year-old. "There's so little to express yourself with, and people are so inarticulate. The only thing left to do is go out to dinner." Which is exactly what we're doing, eating at an Asian restaurant in one of Washington D.C.'s ubiquitous strip malls.

A former "Sassiest Boy in America" (once *Sassy*'s highest honor), Svenonius has always been into half-serious, half-comic sociological theories. His early-'90s band, the Nation of Ulysses, issued way-semiotic manifestos on how to live (no drugs, no retro behavior) over an abrasive, avant racket. After the Nation broke up, there was the short-lived Cupid Car Club, which released one single that included (ironic) suicide instructions on the cover. Eventually, Svenonius and Ulysses members James Canty (guitar and organ) and Steve Gamboa (drums) teamed up with bassist Michelle Mae, formerly of the Olympia band the Frumpies, to create Make-Up.

On their latest efforts, *Sound Verité* and *Make-Up After Dark*, on K and Dischord, respectively, the band lays down a groovy, dance-friendly vibe, with Svenonius ad-libbing surreal lyrics about keeping it real. "We wanted to do something really rhythm-based," he says. "Our original plan was to have a guitarless band." Audience interaction is another goal. Svenonius was inspired by the heartfelt services at D.C.'s Holiness churches, which feature live bands. He calls his listeners "children," incites them to "say yeah," and generally works like a preacher whipping a congregation into a worshiping frenzy.

The band's fashion sense has also evolved since the days of the Nation, when they looked like juvenile delinquents from the 1950s. For dinner, Svenonius is dressed spectacularly in a fitted beige pea coat and brown flared hip-huggers tailored within an inch of their life. On their upcoming tour, the band plans to wear outfits custom-made by Gamboa's wife. "We have to keep it interesting for us and the audience," Svenonius says, effortlessly spinning out another theoretical riff. "One of the earmarks of capitalism is creating new ideas for new consumption, and artists are encouraged to do the same. It's all very similar." CHRISTINA KELLY

Meet Make-Up: from left, Steve Gamboa, Michelle Mae, James Canty, and Ian Svenonius

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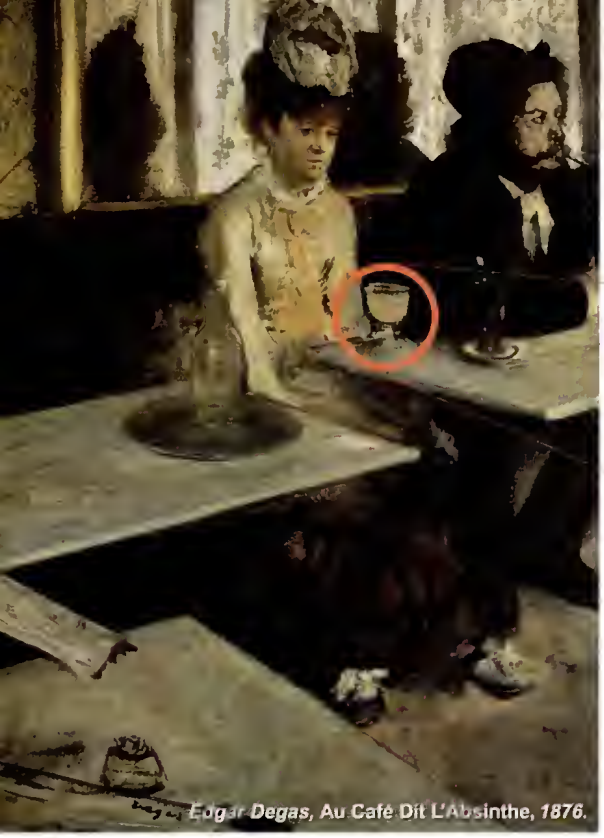
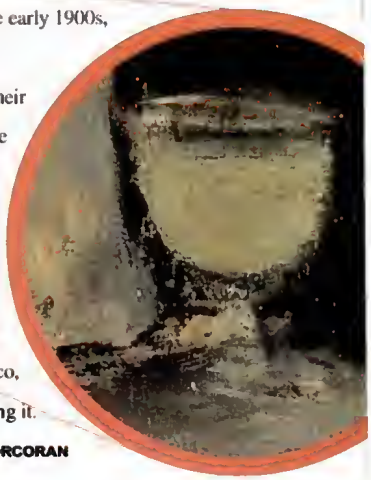


Edgar Degas, Au Café Dit L'Absinthe, *1876.*

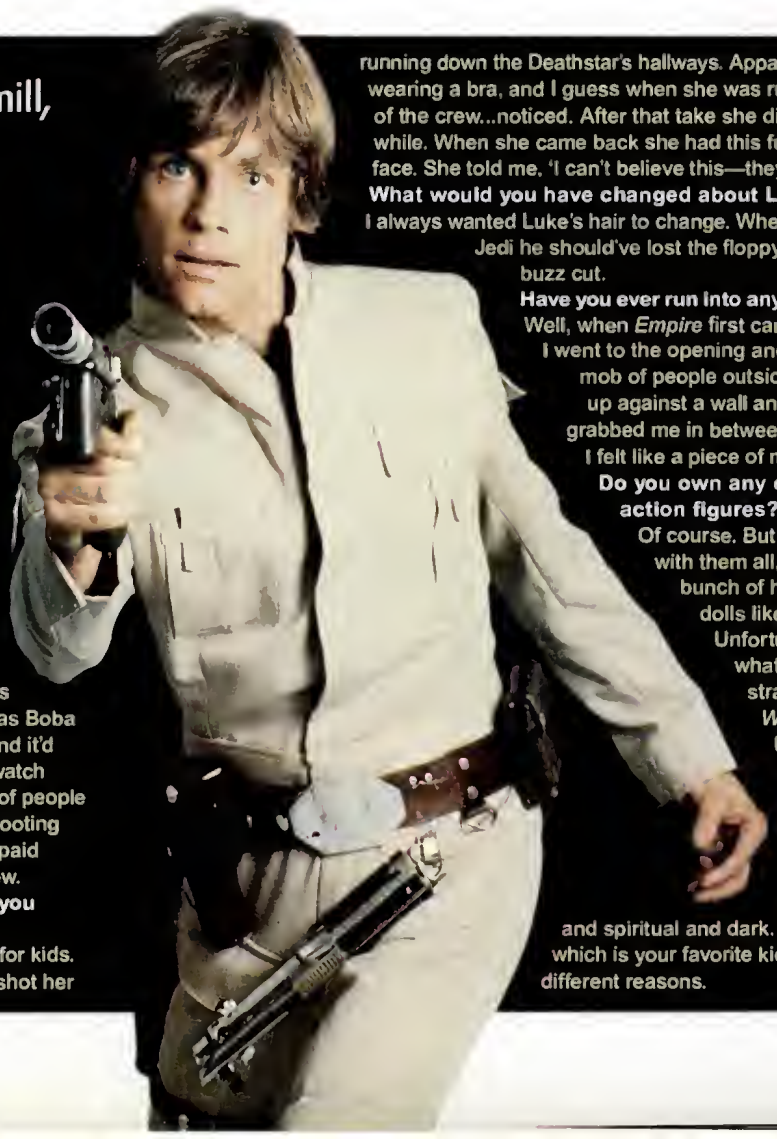
Absinthe Minded

The return of the mind-altering muse.

ABSINTHE, THE EMERALD-GREEN liqueur exalted (and abused) by Hemingway, Verlaine, and Rimbaud, is gaining ground as a hipper, more potent alternative to tired Martini chic. The drink, which goes for about $50 a bottle on the black market, was banned throughout most of the world in the early 1900s, but the NyQuil-flavored, 144-proof spirit has sprung up again thanks to an underground network of enterprising sophisticates who've begun distilling their own versions of the dandy elixir. Along with its heralded cosmic rush, a large part of absinthe's appeal is its rarity: The key ingredient is the hard-to-find, psychoactive plant wormwood. On the Web, where bootleggers trade recipes, absinthe reviews range from "two thumbs up" to "gave me interesting stomach cramps." Still in question, however, are the drink's alleged hallucinogenic powers. Says Matthew Baggott, a research associate at the Drug Dependence Research Center at the University of California at San Francisco, who's currently studying absinthe's effects: "More and more people are using it. But nobody really knows what this stuff can do to your head." **MONICA CORCORAN**



Jedi Fever Mark Hamill, a.k.a. Luke Skywalker, celebrates the rerelease of the *Star Wars* trilogy.



What did you think the first time you read the script?
I was like, is this a parody? I remember one of my lines was: "But we can't turn our back on fear. Fear is our only defense." I mean, who talks like that? Overall, I saw it as much closer to *The Wizard of Oz* than *Star Trek*. You've got a pirate, a wizard, a farm boy, a princess, and an evil overlord. We could've been traveling in a horse-drawn carriage.

Did you know all along that Darth Vader was Luke's father?
No, and I was always asking. George told me that Luke's father fell into a volcano. I wondered about Luke's mother, too. I always thought that she should've been disguised as Boba Fett, that I could pull off Boba Fett's mask and it'd be my mother who'd been secretly sent to watch over me. Eventually, I was one of a handful of people who learned Vader was my father during shooting for *Empire*. At the time, extras were getting paid by the British tabloids to leak what they knew.

You never got to kiss Carrie Fisher. Do you feel gypped?
Well, George really wanted it to be suitable for kids. The very first day Carrie was on set they shot her running down the Deathstar's hallways. Apparently she wasn't wearing a bra, and I guess when she was running, some of the crew...noticed. After that take she disappeared for a while. When she came back she had this funny look on her face. She told me, 'I can't believe this—they taped me down.'

What would you have changed about Luke?
I always wanted Luke's hair to change. When he became a Jedi he should've lost the floppy look and gotten a buzz cut.

Have you ever run into any *Star Wars* freaks?
Well, when *Empire* first came out in Germany, I went to the opening and there was this mob of people outside. I got pushed up against a wall and somebody grabbed me in between my legs. Really. I felt like a piece of meat.

Do you own any of your own action figures?
Of course. But I let my kids play with them all, so now I have a bunch of headless *Star Wars* dolls like everybody else. Unfortunately, I never got what has to be the strangest piece of *Star Wars* memorabilia: Underoos with my face on them.

Which is your favorite of the three movies?
Empire was especially cerebral and spiritual and dark. But it's like asking which is your favorite kid. I like them all for different reasons. **ZEV BOROW**

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COMIX

Noir Town

Brian Michael Bendis upends the thrill kill cult in his new crime series, *Jinx*.

WHEN BRIAN MICHAEL BENDIS set out to create a sequel to his celebrated graphic novel, *A.K.A. Goldfish*, he wanted a hero that was three things—armed, dangerous, and female. What he came up with is *Jinx*, and it's the rare crime series that puts a woman on top without dressing her in leather or spandex.

The series' eponymous hero is endowed with neither porn-mag proportions nor steely nerve; rather, she's a quick-witted, muscle-shirted young woman who just happens to hunt down bond-jumpers for a living. When she meets David Gold, the hapless (but charming) con man from *A.K.A. Goldfish*, it's clear they're in for one twisted romance. Their first date is broken up by a gun-toting psycho out for Gold's head, while their second ends with Jinx handcuffing Gold to her bedpost. It's not sex she's after, though, but money: the three million dollars of hidden Mafia loot he was mumbling about in his sleep.

The story occasionally evokes the grifter-noir atmosphere of Jim Thompson, but Bendis still piles on plenty of genre-toying quirks: *Jinx*'s underworld squalor is as bizarre as it is bleak (in one scene, Jinx dons maternity gear to corner a helpless felon), and Bendis's dead-on dialogue is peppered with the kind of wry one-liners you might hear on a *Seinfeld* episode. "Jinx? Is that a name or a lifestyle?" Gold inquires when the two first meet.

Bendis underscores this world-weary irony with ominous pen-and-ink illustrations that often stretch the medium's visual limits. For instance, when Gold kicks his partner's head through a windshield, unevenly fractured panels spray across a two-page spread. The series also experiments with photography and xerography—or, as Bendis puts it, "anything that makes black and white"—yet the 28-year-old Cleveland native isn't afraid to use more time-honored comic conceits, like the occasional *Batman*-style WHAM! or CRASH! to punctuate a fight.

"I want people to realize how far comics have come," is how the Cleveland Institute of Art graduate explains his striking mix of visual styles. "Although what inspires me is escapism in its purest form. I mean, you don't have to live in a world of crime to fantasize about being a kick-ass motherfucker."

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SOUNDBITES

by Julia Chaplin and Sia Michel

Fire Starters

With alternative rock grown stale and record sales on the skids, the music industry targets electronica as the next big thing.

"TECHNO = DEATH," Madonna kvetched to SPIN in a January 1996 cover story. "I hear it a lot, but it doesn't appeal to me." Less than one year later, Madonna's label, Maverick Records, laid out millions of dollars for the British techno act Prodigy and its indie label Mute—and Madonna even wooed them with assurances that she works out to the group's jittery sounds.

Prodigy's sweet revenge—the culmination of a 20-label bidding war just two years after they were dropped by Elektra—is emblematic of an industry-wide flip-flop. After routinely ignoring rave culture for the past ten years, major labels are wagering that electronica—an umbrella term being used to describe sample-based dance groups such as Prodigy, the Chemical Brothers, and Underworld—could prove to be the savior of a slumping music industry lousy with modern-rock lightweights. "Anyone with a drum machine and a synthesizer can get signed right now," quips Gerry Gerrard, booking agent for the above British acts, as well as for industrial pioneers Nine Inch Nails.

Not only have the trippy sights and sounds of artists like Orbital and Future Sound of London broken onto MTV via the new late-late-night show *Amp*, but user-friendly electronica like the Chemical Brothers/Noel Gallagher collaboration "Setting Sun" and Prodigy's "Firestarter" have joined the ranks of No Doubt and Everclear on modern-rock radio stations and in MTV heavy rotation. Caroline, the label that introduced alt-rock heavyweights Hole and Smashing Pumpkins, is rumored to be cutting down its rock roster to focus on its electronica-oriented Astralwerks offshoot, while Mercury Records is currently developing an "electronic/dance/techno" imprint of its own. Outpost Records, a subsidiary of Geffen, has recently signed a distribution deal with the innovative trip-hop indie City of Angels, but other majors are simply ordering rock-weaned A&R execs to hit the raves and find "the next Chemical Brothers."

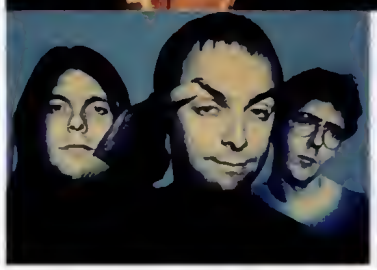
"My favorite story," laughs Astralwerks A&R/Marketing Codirector Andrew Goldstone, "is about one of the guys who tried to sign Prodigy. He said, 'Sure I get it, but how do you know when their songs start and stop?' "

In fact, Prodigy is one of the most accessible acts in techno. While electronica is traditionally faceless and studio-driven, Prodigy ooze rock-star personality, from their cyberpunk hairdos to their Kraftwerk-meets-NIN stage moves. "When Prodigy played a festival with the Foo Fighters, Dave Grohl said they put on the most amazing show ever," reports MTV's Amy Finnerty, who was instrumental in programming the band's "Firestarter" video last October when they were still indie unknowns. Though Prodigy's second album, *Music for the Jilted Generation*, went to No. 1 on the British charts, Prodigy were personae non grata in the U.S. until KNDD radio flew them to Seattle for a concert last August.

"All the MTV and KROQ bigwigs were there," says Mute Records General Manager Mark Fotiadis, whose label signed Prodigy in 1994 when no one else was interested. "Prodigy kicked ass, and the next day the station held a call-in where listeners voted them their favorite bend 20-to-1—that was all with no radio airplay." A few months later, "Firestarter," a song that wasn't even available on an album, was "Buzz Bin" fodder, and thus began a feeding frenzy that is leaving long-term electronica advocates skeptical.

"Prodigy's deal raises the stakes so high so quickly," says Astralwerks' Goldstone. "There are still only a handful of potentially superstar electronic acts; when Nirvana broke there were already ten rock bands in every tiny town. There's just not that much talent in America right now."

Power trio: clockwise, from top, Prodigy, Underworld, and the Chemical Brothers.



Though premature growth might spell the scene's early death, another outcome seems just as likely: that commercial-friendly electronica will break the mainstream in the hands of stalwarts like U2 and Everything but the Girl, who have absorbed elements of electronica just as up-and-comers like Underworld and Prodigy have borrowed heavily from the rock aesthetic.

In any case, all industry eyes are on Prodigy and the Chemical Brothers, whose highly anticipated second albums are both scheduled for April releases. Prodigy are soliciting guest vocals from Crispian Mills of Kula Shaker and Skin from Skunk Anansie, while the Chemical Brothers are learning to live with "rock'n'roll adoration." "Making this record is a bit scary," says Brother Tom Rowlands. "We never expected anyone to like us besides our friends. The goalposts seemed to have moved a bit." ●

CLOCKWISE, FROM TOP: SIN/HAYLEY MADDEN/LGI; STEVE DOUBLE/RETNA; SIN/STEVE DOUBLE/LGI

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Slaves to the rhythm: Russell Simins, left, and Jon Spencer.

JON SPENCER BLUES EXPLOSION
ATARI TEENAGE RIOT

The Roxy
New York City
December 14, 1996

When Fred Schneider is introduced as "Soul Brother No. 1," you know you're in for an evening of strange signifying. By the time the gleefully nelly B-52's frontman made a cameo, in a shirt unbuttoned all the way to his happy trail, the stage of New York's Roxy—a converted roller rink—had already been trod by a German digital hardcore band and a Blowfly-like African-American comic; Jon Spencer Blues Explosion, white bloozemen from way down East, had just finished "Bellbottoms," a paean to retro chic. And to make the event truly postmodern, Spencer soloed on theremin, just like Jimmy Page in *The Song Remains the Same*.

Though he's been playing dumb since a scathing review by a black critic called his act a "coon show," Spencer, a former semiotics major, is a master of tweaking cultural symbols for maximum provocation. No gesture ever seems pure; when 70-year-old Mississippi bluesman R.L. Burnside recently joined the band on a San Francisco stage, he was being simultaneously honored by his friends, baited into stereotypical trash talk, and milked for authenticity-by-association. The JSBE are classic what've-you-got? rebels: They raise questions about cultural ownership and racial dialectic, but never try to answer them.

"Make it fucked-up!" Spencer shouted by way of cosmology, wiry and electric in an iridescent shirt, and the preternaturally tight band—Spencer, drummer Russell Simins, and guitarist Judah Bauer—brought an edgy intensity to favorites like "Afro," "Flavor," and the new single "2 Kindsa Love." When the light was right, you could actually see the "sweat of the Blues Explosion" fly off their foreheads like a Dan Clowes cartoon; Spencer invoked both Elvis-the-pelvis and the Godfather of Soul, and, as a finale, embraced Simins so hard the trapsman fell off his stool. It was visceral, it was entertaining. So why did the performance seem so empty?

Perhaps it was the aftershocks of Atari Teenage Riot, the genre-freaking support act. Like Minor Threat with a drum machine, the Teutonic mixed-race/gender group set hardcore guitar samples to 200 b.p.m. junglist grooves and scorched-throat vocals about hunting down neo-Nazis, lyrics grounded in personal run-ins with the big black boot. In another context, such trad/rad lyrics might seem like typical coffeehouse calls-to-arms; but in this sonic maelstrom they relayed the kind of irony-proof possibility that still leaves people bemoaning the demise of punk and Public Enemy.

Spencer himself may finally be hip to the half-life of a groovyhatefuck; songs from his latest album, *Now I Got Worry*, conflate parody and true appreciation, verging on saying something sincere. But, like a gangsta, he just can't blow that cool pose. Could he be an O.G. after all?

SIA MICHEL

Check your head: 311's Nick Hexum.

311

The Warfield
San Francisco
December 12, 1996

Along with their crossbred comrades No Doubt, 311's the low-cal alternative to high seriousness: swinging where Rage Against the Machine plods, buoyed by a defiant mindlessness ("Play some Pachinko, play some Parcheesi / 'Cause all that angst shit is just cheesy," goes the anti-depth rant "Misdirected Hostility"), and fronted by a lead singer who hasn't had another thought since his original realization that grunge, hip-hop, dancehall, and reggae weren't subcultures but different sections of the record store. When Nick Hexum relives the release that breakthrough offered him, like the bite from "It Takes Two" in "Hive," he's surf music for today—perfect mindless pop.

Mercifully short on faux-homeboy posturing (I didn't catch any *aw yeahs* and only a few *yos*), 311, who used to call Omaha home, proved live that you can take the band off the farm, but you can't take the farm off the band, with a bass solo, several guitar solos, and yes, a drum solo where everyone else left the stage, like it was 1974 or something. Frontmen Hexum and rapper/DJ SA Martinez possess a total of three semi-dope hand gestures, though when everyone jumped up and down at once it inadvertently hit the group's vibe—less musical than aerobic, like a StairMaster's steady churn. Which was entirely appropriate, since the crowd, heavy on clean-cut fraternity burl, was ready for a workout.

Yet even the sweaty guys in baseball caps doing that rap-with-your-arms thing seemed to sense at some point that the show wasn't building up any momentum. With blasting funk workouts succeeding slower ones, and on and on till the break of dawn, or 11 P.M., the concert was like one long 311 song. Since the group prefers boasting to tale telling, indifferently drowns good moments in a sea of dull ones, and breaks things up only for the occasional political gesture—pot good, guns bad—there isn't much for live performance to add. By the time "Down" rolled along, an uneventful two-thirds through, the tell-tale emptiness of low-cal pop had set in: The longer the show lasted, the less satisfying it got.

Hexum called "Do You Right" a "happy slam-dance song," then the band closed the set with the oldies "Fat Chance"—whose chorus goes "Fuck the bullshit / It's time to throw down"—and "Freak Out." It was as close to a manifesto as we were going to get. That's all 311 knows, and apparently all they need to know.

JESSE BERRETT

TOP: GEORGE DESOTA; BOTTOM: JOHN POPPLEWELL.

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Thrilled by the promise of dance music's cutting edge, Bono and band have rei

Photographs by Stephane Sednaoui.

STYLING: SHARON ... HELENE DEAN.

The Pop group: U2, from left: Larry Mullen, Jr., the Edge, Adam Clayton, and Bono.

SOUND OF U2

ented themselves—once again. Ann Powers travels to Dublin for the making of *Pop*.

Come on, Adam, row!" Bono shouts, mastering his sea legs and giving a hearty shove to his oar. Adam Clayton shakes his silvery, close-shaven head and smirks. Truth is, Clayton's the one moving our yellow dinghy across Dublin's Grand Canal in the murk of this summer midnight. We're crossing a waterway in the Quays, the labyrinth of locks where the River Liffey meets the

Canal and the River Dodder to form e basin that feeds the city's industrial mills. Ireland's famous green finds no foothold here; this is a place not of poets but of forgotten laborers. Few new buildings warm the landscape. Our passage lies between two of them: Hanover Studios, which looks like a displaced beach house with its whitewashed wood and big windows, and the cheerily imposing condominium that houses Windmill Lane.

The members of U2 trek from studio to studio several times a day, working on their new album, *Pop*. Before the Edge's 35th birthday a few days ago, they traveled these 25 yards by car or foot across a nearby bridge—not much of a trip, until you factor in the inevitable pack of tourists waiting outside for snapshots. This raft, a gift to U2's guitarist from the recording crew, allows for discreet escapes. It also offers Bono, whose scruffy reddish hair and stocky workingman's body make him look like the type of Irishman who could have made a life hauling cod off boats, a chance to play the salt.

Trying on personae is one of Bono's favorite activities, and our brief encounter with the waves allows him to run through a few. As Clayton navigates, Bono sings. He bellows, really—improvised arias, "Michael Row the Boat Ashore," whatever seems to suit our watery environs. "Ahoy!" he shouts toward the lit apartments of the condominium, nearly tipping us into the dank water. "Maybe we should use the motor," Clayton suggests. "Ah, we're almost there," Bono replies. A handful of stars glow in the indigo sky. "I love the sea life!" he declares, and for a moment it seems like he might take hold and steer the raft downriver, following the Liffey toward the soft mouth of the Irish Sea.

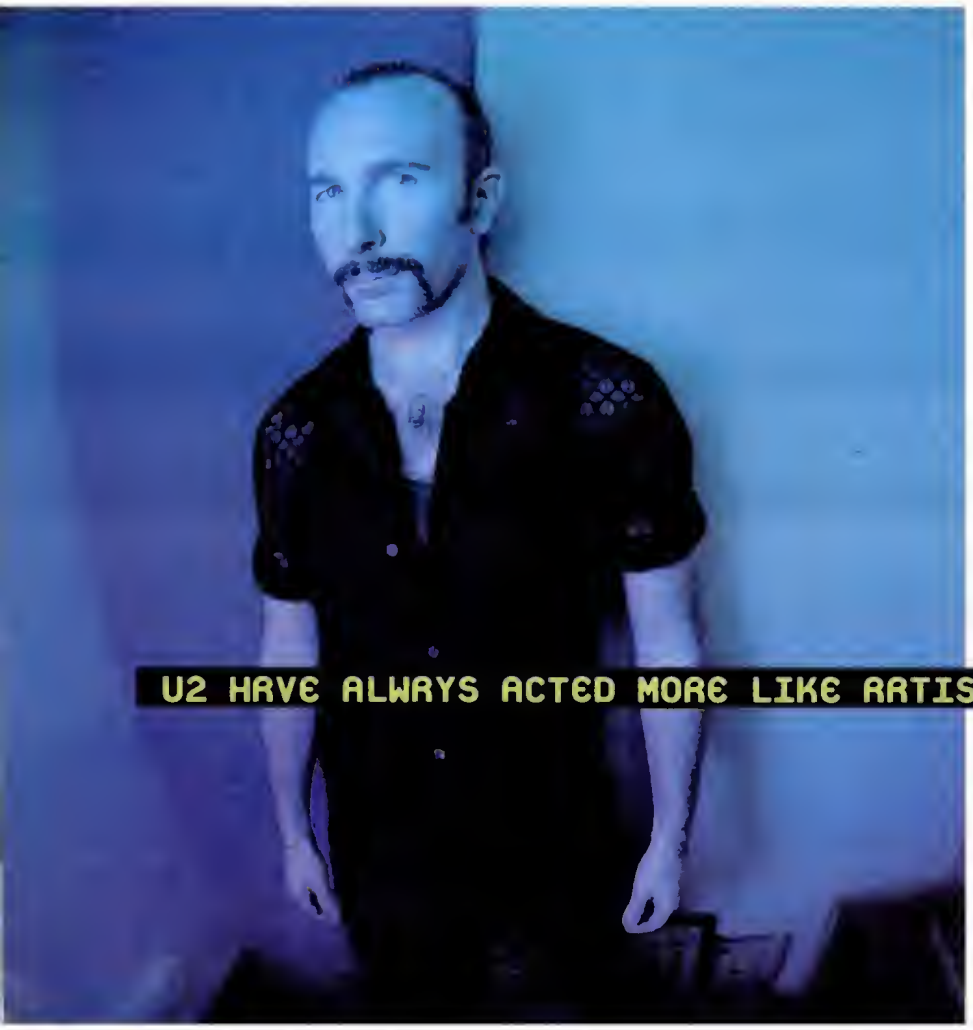
As much as he might like to let the current pull him toward some new adventure, Bono stays on course. This moonlit interlude can be no more than that. He and Clayton are in the middle of a recording session, and DJ Howie B., renowned captain of the U.K.'s rapid-growth ambient-electronic music scene, awaits them in one of the Windmill Lane studios. We secure the dinghy to the cement bank and climb up into e parking lot. Jumping the security gate, we escend three flights of stairs end enter the messy den where Howie stages his unending psychedelic show.

"Hanover is the daytime," Bono whispers to me, "but Windmill Lene is the night." Four or five overlapping light projections fill the walls, geometric shapes in Day-Glo green and orange end pink. Howie, a dark Scottish imp in a striped soccer jersey, stands at the gigantic console, fiddling with his latest version of U2's soon-to-be-released single, "Discothéque." The sweet smell of hashish tickles our nostrils. Clayton plops down on the couch and rolls his own herbally enhanced cigarette. Bono asks the second engineer for a glass of red wine.

"It's magic," says Howie of the sound flowing out of the room's speakers. Howie thinks a lot of things are megic, including his current role as what drummer Lerry Mullen, Jr., calls U2's "disco guru." A manically prolific ambient music constructionist who's mede albums under his own neme and as Spacelab, as well as remixed cuts by such genre-busters as Everything but the Girl and Björk, Howie's been ensconced in Windmill Lene since early on in the recording process, serving as e trusted gauge of what's wicked and what's washed up as U2 forge their allegiance with this still-forming sonic universe.

Right now, as Howie hears it, nothing's more magical than Clayton's bass line, which anchors the direction of the "Discothéque" remix (producers David Morales, Steve Osborne, and David Holmes have also crafted mixes of "Discothéque"). Clayton takes in the praise from a dim corner of the couch, his sleepy smile taking on a bit of a glow. "Discothéque" 's pulse bubbles up and fills the room; Edge's wah-wah guitar does the bump with Clayton's popcorn bass line and spars with Mullen's manic disco drumbeat. The double-tracked vocal captures a sleazy blend of seduction and disgust. Bono, drawn in, wants more. "Let me redo the middle part," he says, cajoling. Howie doesn't need much persuasion. He cues up the tape. "Ready to go," he announces.

"When we do it live, I want to put 'Love to Love You Baby' in here," Bono says slyly as he begins. "Discothéque"'s throb builds. Invoking Donna Summer sets Bono off, and es he riffs on the phrase "You've got heaven in your heert" his moens grow sultry, woozy. He ends the repetition with a twisted, choked falsetto note, then plunges into a growling rap about all the forces that can enslave a man. Meanwhile, Howie's shifting the levels, matching Clayton's bass to the tenor of Bono's words. Finally, the music sweeps over Bono's vocal, and the track ends. Bono falls back into the couch. "Magic," Howie proclaims.



U2 HRVE ALWRYS ACTED MORE LIKE RRTISTS THAN ROCKERS. "I'M NOT THE

When Clayton and Bono row me across the river, it is August. *Pop* should be finished any day now. Yet the band, Howie, and producer Flood remain submerged in 12-hour recording sessions thet heve so far produced fewer than five complete songs. Island, U2's label, is discreetly champing at the bit; the veteran crew et Principle Menagement simply shrugs its collective shoulders every morning. "Nearly all the records heve been finished in e spirit of crisis," explains Paul McGuinness, U2's manager for neerly 20 years end the group's unofficial fifth member. "Maybe that's good. Maybe it's necessary. You can see how hard they're fighting for this record."

While Bono and Clayton submit to disco delirium across the river, the goings-on at Hanover prove the aptness of McGuinness's words. As Mullen watches Winston Churchill on TV, Edge and Flood try again and again to capture the ideel guitar part for a track called "Gone." "I've just got to come up with e mix that's emotional and heartfelt, economical and clear," mutters Flood, longtime U2 engineer-turned–head honcho, his ever-radiant smile hardly hiding his frustretion. In bomber jacket and wire rims, the renowned producer of PJ Harvey and Nick Cave looks like a computer nerd trying to hack the perfect code. Edge, petient es e farmer, sits in a streight-becked chair; he's always willing to try again. At eny rate, neither man will settle. They'll be here another two hours; several weeks later, they'll trash the track entirely and rebuild it from its core.

Men at work: The Pop sessions show U2 making music with even more intensity than usual.

Though a summer-camp playfulness pervades U2's work environments, with their many comfortable lounging erees, kitchens well-stocked with cookies, caffeine, end alcohol, and a catering staff providing nightly three-entrée meals, the mood within the studios themselves can often grow es stern as en SAT testing room. U2 do not permit supermodels to drape themselves ettractively over the engineering boards; they do not take long lunches with visiting Hollywood stars. Sometimes on Thursdays—Pie Day, because the ceterers offer crusty shepherd's tarts thet night—they'll drop by the Kitchen, the bar in the basement of the Clarence Hotel, for a 2 A.M. beer. Other than that, what they do is work.

"There's none of that naughty-boy syndrome, where musicians just skip out for the day," reports Flood.

"No, there's no skipping," Howie concurs. "Edge does go to his cooking classes, though. Every Monday afternoon at 4 o'clock."

Edge's interest in soufflés aside, the *Pop* sessions show U2 making music with even more intensity then usuel. The extra pressure comes from the band's determination to break once and for all from the style that made them femous. in the 1980s U2 invented the modern-rock sound that many Alternative Nation bands, from Live to Stabbing Westward, still steal from—big guiters, eernest vocels, wide open speces in every song. But since

an insult to enyone who understands the value of a good hip shake. "Is something authentic because it's in runners end e plaid shirt?" he fumes. "Is it authentic because it has no ambition? If that's the case, give me some fucking plestic pants, and quickly."

Thet's eesy for Bono to say now, after spending the '90s wearing nearly nothing but vinyl. But et the end of the '80s, U2 was the very band he's just derided. The gigantic sound and transcendent imagery thet made them postpunk's ultimate rock heroes collepsed with the commercial and artistic failure of 1988's documentary film and double-album soundtrack, *Rettle and Hum,* which made them look like minstrels and fools.

The new U2 began with *Achtung Beby.* Recording that album, in Berlin with Eno at the helm and Flood manning the engineer's board, transformed U2; they went on to mount one of the most ambitious tours in rock history: the Brechtian media frenzy Zoo TV. Then they made *Zooropa,* an album sexed up with an electronic shimmer and rife with images of a future lived through holographic billboards and crashed cars. *Zooropa* took U2 as far from the monastic mysticism of *The Joshua Tree* as they could go. It freed U2 from itself.

The next step was for its individual members to free themselves from U2 for a while. They took a year off after completing the *Zooropa* tour in 1993.

EAST BIT APOLOGETIC IF PEOPLE THINK WE'RE PRETENTIOUS," SAYS EDGE.

1990, the Bend of the '80s has been tunneling awey from that sound. The retreat was inspired, partly, by what rock became after it went "alternative." Bono hetes that category, and has scornful words for the artists who fall under its mentle. He decries their glamorization of heroin ("talk about pseudoreligious") and their smug antifashion attitude. Most of all, he condemns the notion of a certain brand of raw rock as the music's only authentic form. He considers this "perticularly male white Anglo-Saxon aspect" to be

"It was the first long break U2 ever had," says Cleyton. "We'd worked for 14 years straight." He spent most of the next 12 months in New York City, studying music and getting his head together after the tour's excesses. (These days, Clayton orders Club Orange sodas in bars and, besides a little smoke now and then, is substance-free.) Mullen, too, recharged his batteries in New York, then returned home to Dublin to prepare for fatherhood; his longtime companion, Ann Aecheson, gave birth to a baby boy in May

ANJA GRABERT © U2 LTD.

"I DON'T REALLY LIKE HANGING OUT WITH MUSICIANS," SAYS CLAYTON.

1996. Edge nurtured a new relationship with Morleigh Steinberg, the Los Angeles–based choreographer who was the "Mysterious Ways" belly dancer on the outdoor leg of the Zoo TV Tour. Bono spent time with his wife, Ali, and their two daughters, but also hopped around the globe, collaborating with fellow one-name wonders like Sinatra and Pavarotti.

"TALKING ABOUT PEAVEY AMPS IS NOT MY THING."

Finally, bit by bit, U2's foursome started to want to be a band again. "Without really discussing it much," says Clayton, "we realized we were all listening to the same music." The druggy, atmospheric soul trances of Portishead, Tricky, and Massive Attack, then sweeping Europe and seeping into the corners of America, had captivated all four players. Reunited in London in the fall of 1994 and calling themselves the Passengers, U2 and producer Brian Eno explored these new avenues. Ambient in the good and bad senses—sometimes haunting, often barely there—the Passengers album *Original Soundtracks 1* let the band get loose in a way they'd never allowed themselves before. But it definitely didn't cut it as the newest U2 breakthrough. "I don't like that record," says the famously frank Mullen.

To carry the band to another level, *Pop* would have to offer more than just mood. For Edge, this has meant establishing a new relationship with the guitar, taking into account the mind-altering noises being made by bands who'd rejected the instrument. "The sounds that a guitar is capable of creating are at this point cliché," he insists. "The challenge is to find things you can do with the instrument that are not already used up." Clayton and Mullen, who'd taken on the synth-rock challenge with their 1996 update of the *Mission: Impossible* theme, would have to figure out how to translate the lessons they'd learned from those cold machines into the warm language of U2's rock'n'roll. To aid them in fusing rock's aggressiveness with dance music's wide musical and emotional range, U2 gathered a top-notch group of musical talents: Flood, Howie B., Soul II Soul grandmaster Nellee Hooper, and Steve Osborne of the British electronic duo Perfecto offered a virtual living encyclopedia of current studio trends.

All of which might have simply served the dilettantish whims of a veteran rock band trying to stay fresh if U2 were not pursuing a more profound goal with *Pop*. Having refreshed their rock sound with dance elements and synthesized flourishes, the band now wants to enact a true fusion of the two often-warring genres. "We're trying to find the access point connecting lots of different music," says Clayton. "We're actually trying to make a kind of music that doesn't exist yet," adds Bono. "That is a terrifying place to be."

The '90s house-techno-ambient evolution proved to be an ideal conduit for U2's new ambition. Steeped in the black-music history they'd already been exploring on *Rattle and Hum*, the new dance music was spiritual and iconoclastic, aggressive and sexy. The contradictions that classic rock had imposed between mind and body, black and white, tradition and innovation—contradictions that had ultimately entrapped U2—fell apart in the wash of sample-happy syncretism. With *Pop*, U2 hoped to match that music's ferment of dizziness, humor, love, corruption, sex, surrender, pain.

"We wanted to make a record," Bono concludes, "that would actually feel like your life."

As they sprawl around Hanover's extra-long pine dinner table at the beginning of another arduous night, the only hint of U2's self-conception as a team fighting a mighty battle is the uniformity of their haircuts. Three of the four (the classically cut Mullen is the exception) wear the barely-there *Trainspotting* do currently fashionable among British clubgoers. The effect differs on each one: Bono seems more rugged, older; Clayton, brashly chic due to his Warholian tint; Edge, surprisingly hatless, looks like a rock'n'roll Captain Picard. It's weird that these men, known for refusing trends, would all give in to such an obvious one. But in the context of the recording sessions, the common style reads like a shared commitment to change.

Satan is surreal: Bono as MacPhisto during the Zoo TV Tour.

"They're egoless," says Flood. "You don't find many bands where that's true for all the members. They're trying to achieve something that sounds like them, but in a whole new way. And as Bono puts it, good is not good enough. They're only after greatness."

Most rock stars indulge in ways that have to do with their lower impulses, grabbing as much sex or money or sycophancy as they can get. U2 indulges in another way—by feeding their hunger as artists. "People find it hard to accept artists working above their station," says Edge. "But the most interesting stuff comes from people doing things they shouldn't really be doing, acting outside of the boundaries of convention. I'm not in the least bit apologetic if people think we're pretentious."

U2 have always acted more like artists than rockers, even down to the famous pals they've made in recent years. Novelist Salman Rushdie is a

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well-known U2 fan and friend. Luciano Pavarotti invited the group to his annual charity concert in Modena, Italy, and subsequently appeared on the Passengers' semi-hit, "Miss Sarajevo," adding an aria that lifted the song to another level of grace. And filmmaker Wim Wenders, a longtime *compañero* of Bono's, is currently working on a production deal for a science-fiction film, *The Billion Dollar Hotel*, based on a Bono concept about a group of outcasts who populate a futuristic Los Angeles flophouse.

U2's members see their associations with such notables as an antidote to the soul-draining boredom of the average rock scene. "Personally speaking, I don't really like hanging out with musicians," Clayton admits. "It's just...it's hard to really talk about anything. Sitting and talking about Peavey amps is not my thing." But artists are not the only answer to this ennui. Perhaps Clayton, who spent several months of 1994 engaged to supermodel Naomi Campbell and remains the only romantically unattached member of the band, prefers that old-fashioned gentleman's pursuit—the company of beautiful women? He smiles. "That's always fun. If you can't find intellectual conversation, that will do."

Clayton's dalliance with Campbell seriously increased U2's fabulousity quotient, as the English fashion princess began carting her friends (notably Christy Turlington and Helena Christensen) around the globe to catch Zoo TV concerts. It's pretty standard rock star behavior, hanging out with models, but U2 very publicly approached it as high camp, as if they were doing it for intellectual, not libidinal, reasons. It was all part of the band's switch from over-the-top sincerity to ultravivid irony.

"I used to find it uncomfortable to be around a lot of things," says Bono. "Then I found these goggles. I put them on and I found that I could go anywhere." The goggles were part of his getup as the Fly, one of his Zoo TV costumes; they were also imaginary shields that kept him from seeing the jet-set scene U2 entered into as anything but a giant game. Edge, also, tried to avoid too much entanglement. "It was really fun and good," he says. "But I also was aware that something that started off as being very ironic had the possibility of turning around and biting us if we weren't careful."

More than his bandmates, Bono's taken that risk by playing ambassador to the stars, showing up at Cannes or behind the bar at the hottest new Soho nightspot. But he claims he'd never want to get stuck in the in crowd. "I hang out with every set," he says. "Anyone will tell you that. From the penthouse to not just the pavement but under the pavement. I'll go anywhere there's an idea hatching or a great party being thrown."

"Bono has an acute sense of how trends are evolving," says Wenders, "of what people need, and what people feel."

There's a line in the *Pop* song "Miami" that captures Bono's longing for both excitement and protection: "We could make something beautiful," he sings, "something that wouldn't be a problem." In the *Joshua Tree* days and before, any encounters with what a Christian would call temptation posed a problem, not only for U2's souls but for their image. Partaking of the usual perks of the rock superstardom would make the band seem hypocritical. "We always had girls sleeping in our rooms, but we never considered them groupies," says Bono. "Our female fans would show up with *Siddhartha* under their arms, and they'd want to talk."

Such oddly chaste behavior stemmed, in large part, from U2's reputation as spiritual seekers. Edge, Mullen, and Bono once belonged to a fundamentalist Christian commune (Clayton, forever secular, sidestepped that phase), and every album has contained its smattering, small or large, of Jesus imagery. The chime of Edge's guitar, coupled with Bono's striving wails, formed a sound that aimed heavenward: all head and heart, no hips. It's no coincidence that the band's fascination with '70s soul and '90s dance music coincided with a dive into life's carnal joys and perils. "The challenge for us is to factor our spirituality into the mix along with our sexuality," says Edge.

On *Pop*, Bono's lyrics still address spiritual matters, but instead of the heartfelt yet sometimes ponderous pronouncement of albums past, his phrases can now elude linear comprehension. They're like little shards of theology thrown out above the din. In "Wake Up Dead Man," Bono calls for Jesus's return, sounding like a drunk calling for another whisky, and trying

HANGING OUT WITH MODELS IS STANDARD ROCK-STAR BEHAVIOR,

to remember how got to this terrible place: "If there's an order / In all of this disorder / Is it like a tape recorder / Can we rewind it just once more?" He answers himself in "If God Will Send His Angels," a bitter refrain that seems to sink into disbelief—"Nobody else here, baby / No one else here to blame"—to make the point that only human actions can

BUT U2 APPROACHED IT AS HIGH CAMP.

solve earthly problems, divine presence or none. Even on a song as seemingly hedonistic as "Playboy Mansion," Bono returns to matters of the soul's survival in this secular world. "Then will there be no time of sorrow / Then will there be no time for shame," he sings, a psalmist dreaming of rapture in a consumer's paradise.

"I enjoy the test of trying to keep hold of what's sacred, and still being awake, walking around, breaking through the plate glass window," says Bono. "It's one thing being in that holy huddle; it's another thing taking yourself out there into the world."

The Clarence Hotel was built in 1852 at 6-8 Wellington Quay, in the heart of the neighborhood known as Temple Bar. For years it served as a humble stopping point for rural folk and visitors from the rougher North side of the Liffey. As kids, Bono and Edge (then Paul Hewson and Dave Evens, respectively) frequented the hotel's bar, where they could nab an illicit pint of Guinness. They were students together at Mount Temple, a progressive high school on the outskirts of town, just starting to fool around with the idea of a band. "For us the Clarence was a like a secret place," Edge recalls. "The people who used to go there were priests and judges from across the road."

It's not likely that you'll see many men of the cloth

continued on page 112

I'm not the boy next door. I'm the baddest rebounder this game has seen. And my body? It's a temple and milk is the drink of the gods. Three glasses a day give the average man all the calcium he needs. Maybe I should drink six.
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Straight outta hell by way of Florida, Marilyn Manson leads an army of lost boys into the 21st century.

By Jeffrey Rotter.

Photographs by John Scarisbrick.

STYLING: JENNIFER ELSTER/ART DEPARTMENT.

reproduced material

Our Little Satan

The horror: Marilyn Manson, from left, Ginger Fish, Zim Zum, Twiggy Ramirez, Marilyn Manson, and Madonna Wayne Gacy.

Hell might be for children, but on this particular Halloween, Asbury Park, New Jersey, is running a close second. A derelict seaside resort an hour's drive from New York City, this string of boarded-up corn dog stands and wasted art-nouveau theaters is as good a setting as any to wait out the end of a millennium.

It's 2 P.M., a scant 27,754 hours before the turn of the century, and I'm idling behind a convoy of soccer moms in Volvo station wagons, their kids anxious to shed the 'rents and greet their fellow Marilyn Manson fanatics. The band's legion of Goth-come-latelies, a.k.a. "Spooky Kids," are dressed to impress, attired, Trekkie-style, after a favorite band member. In line in front of me, a carload of little Twiggys, dressed in the bassist's soiled tartan skirt and pigtails, bid Mom a grudging farewell and rush to the box office. On the curb beside them, a wee Pogo strokes his peach-fuzz Fu Manchu. A pair of Marilyn Mansons lean against the tour bus.

If Asbury Park is the picture of an old leisure establishment in decay, then Marilyn Manson—Manson, bassist Twiggy Ramirez, keyboardist Madonna Wayne Gacy (alias Pogo), drummer Ginger Fish, and new guitarist Zim Zum—are just the opposite, decay turned into leisure. Manson's mad concoction of shock theater, Nine Inch Nails–derived techno-Goth, and Satan-inspired daily affirmations have found their mark in the vast, bepimpled ear of adolescent America. Spooky shit in the ignoble tradition of Alice Cooper, Glenn Danzig, and *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang*, the band's second full-length release, *Antichrist Superstar*, arrived on the Billboard Top 200 at No. 3. MTV loves Manson, as does director David Lynch, who cast him as a seedy porno star in his new film, *Lost Highway*. Conservative watchdogs Bill Bennett and C. DeLores Tucker despise Manson, accusing *Antichrist*'s distributor, MCA, of "peddling filth for profits." As for Manson himself, he's pleased to be of service: "There's so many people who wouldn't even have a job if they didn't have a bad guy to fool around with." ➤

PREVIOUS SPREAD. CLOTHING CREDITS. FROM LEFT: HELMUT LANG TUX JACKET. YOHJI YAMAMOTO TUX SHIRT. JUNYA WATANABE COMME DES GARÇONS DRESS. ERICKSON BEAMON SILVER BRACELETS. VIVIENNE WESTWOOD SHIRT, TIE, AND JACKET. ERIC JAVITS HAT. ADRIENNE LANDAU FUR. HELMUT LANG DRESS. ERICKSON BEAMON NECKLACE. YOHJI YAMAMOTO TRENCH COAT. VIVIENNE WESTWOOD SHIRT. OH PANTS FOR 3RD

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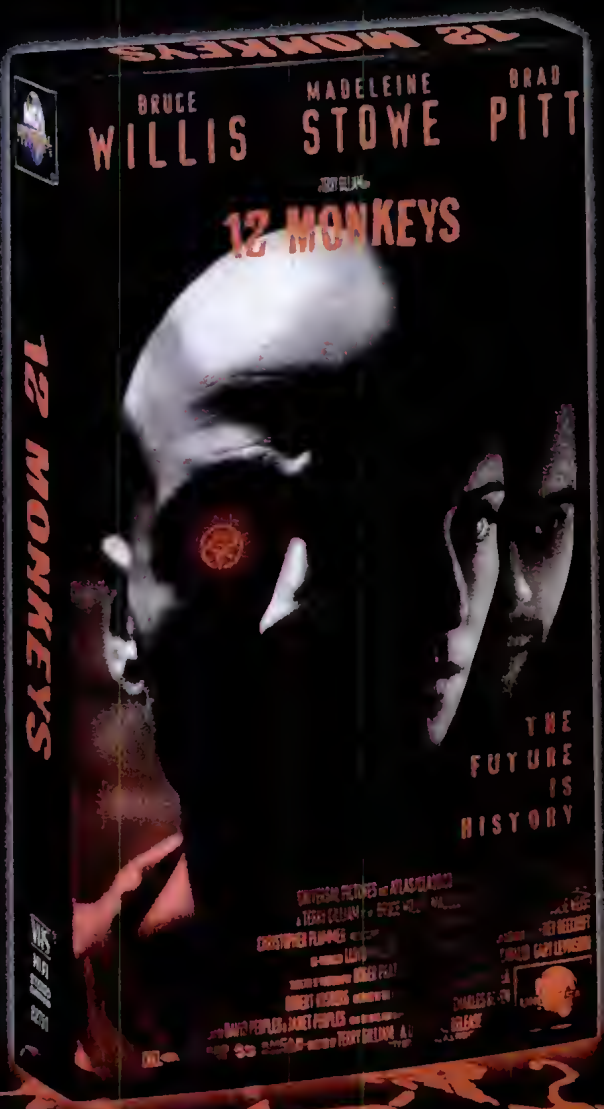

12 MONKEYS

MCA UNIVERSAL HOME VIDEO

COMING JANUARY 28, 1997

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Like meny kids, Merilyn Menson, né Brian Warner, discovered the escepism of rock at a Sunday-school backmasking lecture. He found all his future idols there: Kiss, Alice Cooper, the Beetles, Devid Bowie. "When they said, 'You shouldn't listen to this,' " recalls Manson, "I wanted to know why."

Born to a working-class family in Canton, Ohio, Manson suffered a typically awkward Christian-school youth. "I didn't have a good time," he winces. "I had bed acne. I was really skinny. The jock kids loved to beat the shit out of me. I didn't heve a clique to fit into. That's probably why I relate to my fans so much."

Sundey schoo also skewed Manson against Christian authority. Still, for e would-be Seten, Manson can be downright righteous. "People are very surprised to hear me sey that a lot of my velues ere Christian values," says the Bible-quoting Menson, whose own twist on "love thy neighbor" adds the conditional "unless they deserve to be destroyed." "I think that's part of my shock. I just don't like the way that Christienity combined with the influence of television hes bred a netion of weakness."

The standerd-bearer of moral "weakness" for Manson was his own grandfether, whose taste for enemas, bestial porn, and toy trains left deep scars. "He hed this train set in his basement," remembers Manson, "and whenever he turned it on, it wes to mask the sound of his masturbating. I would tell my perents, but nobody believed me. He wes the one who convinced me that things that were supposed to be pure and American were not."

Manson split the hypocrisy of home for Fort Lauderdale, Florida, at 18, for a college treck in journalism. In 1990, he met guiterist Deisy Berkowitz, end the two founded Marilyn Manson and the Spooky Kids, a drum mechine–driven four-piece performence-art group. When Nine Inch Neils wes on e club tour of Florida, Manson interviewed Trent Reznor for his college newspaper end they exchanged phone numbers. A few slots opening for NIN followed. Later that year, Manson got a call from Reznor: "Trent celled me just after his *Broken* album was finished and asked if I wanted to be in e NIN video," Menson says, still relishing his stroke of good fortune. "We went to the Sharon Tate house for the shoot, and while I wes there, he told me he wanted us to be the first band on his new label."

The band's first album, *Portrait of an Americen Family*, and breakthrough EP, *Smells Like Chiidren*, had aspirations about as low as Grandpe Manson's: a little shock schmaltz, a few coy jebs et tabloid culture, and a cheesy Eurythmics cover. Manson had grander, nastier ideas, but they needed more stately mansions than the bend alone could build. With Reznor (a coproducer of ell the band's material) taking a more active role, *Antichrist Superstar* is the fulfillment of the bend's operatic promise.

On *Antichrist*, Reznor bigs up the Manson like he's remixing the *Nibelungeniied*, downspiraling dense horror-rock through e riotous digital din. "I wented to show thet the band hed some scope, that it wasn't all guiter-bass-drums," Reznor seys. "If you make a whole elbum of 200 b.p.m. songs, after about three minutes, it's not scery enymore." The result is a well-paced, organic, and yes, scary concept album thet cests Manson as a lowly worm who becomes a rock'n'roll Antichrist and destroys the world. For Manson, the album appeals to "the element of everybody's personality thet is nihilistic and hopeless, and decides that, rather than come to a solution [to the world's problems], things should be brought to en end."

But the Antichrist isn't such a Gloomy Gus efter ell. The "up" side to Menson is a downright sunny cell for kids to reject Christianity and "be their own gods." It's a philosophy that, unfortunetely, tekes its cues from Satanism end Nietzsche. "Setanism," seys Menson, "if it was peckaged differently...." It would be Scientology? "Yeeh, exectly." Menson believes his fans are "selling their souls to themselves. They're forming their own values and their own morals based on what makes them happy, not on what makes their perents happy." Which makes him—what?—Kids Are People Too in e bodice and jackboots?

It's nearly 11:00 P.M. at the Asbury Park Theater and the crowd is so wound-up, they could mosh to *Chariie and the Chocolate Factory*. And thet's just what they do. When the familiar balloon of the Oompe-Loompa theme springs from the P.A., signaling the Reverend's arrival, the joint erupts. Menson still looks a little ill at eese from a bomb threet that deleyed the show some two hours, but makes no reference to it until late in the set. As the band bashes out the last meesures of "Tourniquet"—one of the keenest measures of teen worthlessness since Alice Cooper's "I'm Eighteen"—Menson's mind is on the bomb: "How meny of you came here to see me die tonight?" The crowd, not quite getting it, responds in the affirmative. Manson looks bummed, but all this ties in nicely with his messiah trip. "No matter how much they love you, they want a tragedy," he says later.

Marilyn Manson, philosopher? No, worse. Try preacher. The scariest moment of the night—scarier, in some weys, then the bomb threat—is the church revivel/Nezi rally thet accompanies "Antichrist Superstar," the fist-pumper that signals the Antichrist's escension. The lights come up to a nervous martial beat, and illuminate a messive pulpit draped in the Antichrist's emblem, a swastika-fied variation on the electric-shock warning symbol. Dressed in a Swaggert-cut leisure suit, twitching like an Eva Perón marionette, Manson leads his band through a totalitarian slapstick routine that's equal parts tele-evangelist, statesman, and rock star. His reich'n'roll is a little *Kampf* and a little camp, recycling agit-props from Pink Floyd's bong classic *The Weli*, Cherlie Cheplin's *The Great Dictator*, and Leni Riefenstahl's *Triumph of the Wiii*.

The routine is a scething perody end e sincere scare, both. Regrettably, Manson is ill-equipped or unwilling to resolve the contradiction. "It's the study of how people meke rock'n'roll toteliterien," seys Menson, wexing ecedemic. "But it's elso e call to erms. It's e pep rally for the apocalypse." This is the scary part of Menson, end of rock at large: For all its promise of individuel rebellion, "think for yourself" is not a message thet goes pletinum. But try telling that that to the little Mansons camped out by the tour bus.

Early the next morning the bomb still hasn't exploded, and, despite radio broadcasts to the contrary, Menson is still ticking. We're sitting in the suite etop the Berkeley Certeret Hotel, in the same room that Johnny Cesh used decades ago, and Manson is looking more like Brien Warner than I've ever seen him. "There's days when I'd love for everybody to reelize that things heve gone too fer, and that we need to be born egain so that we can appreciete the little things." Manson pauses to look at the television that is elways on, even when he sleeps. "Then there's other days when I think the world deserves to be destroyed. Why should I help enybody? Everybody's stepped on me my whole life. I've put on this crown," he sighs, "but I'm not sure if I want it." ●

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One-time electronic-music evangelist Moby has converted to alternative rock. Talk about bad timing. By Eric Weisbard.

Photograph by Chris Buck.

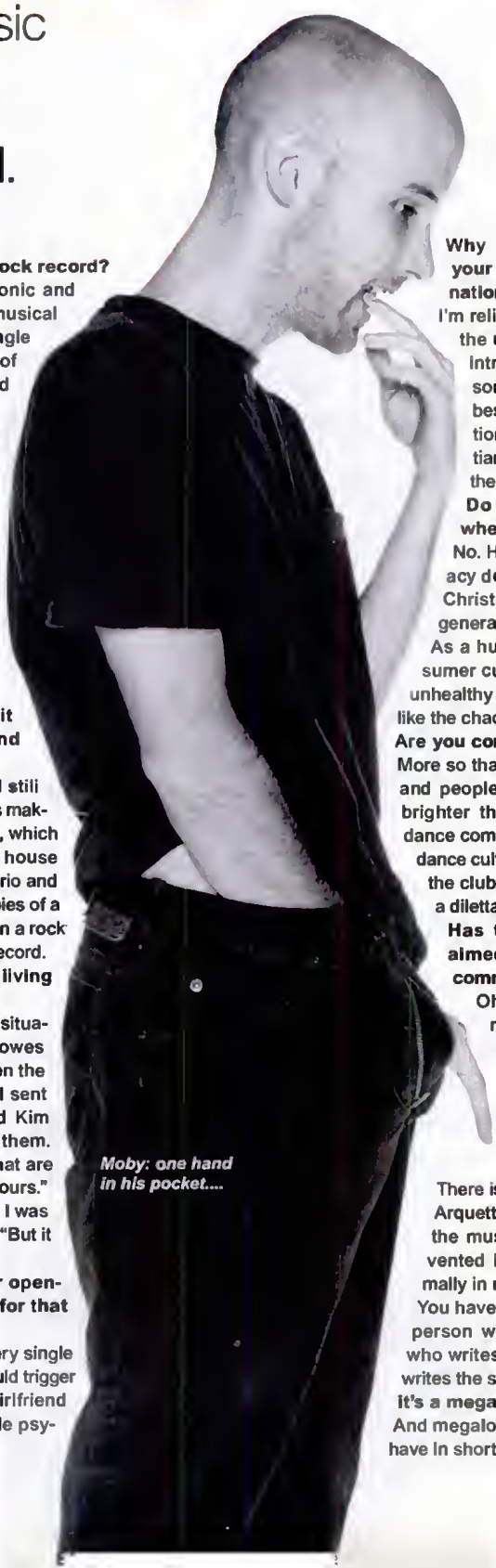
SPIN: What on earth were you thinking, making a rock record?
Moby: On a very simple level, my interest in electronic and dence music has really waned; it's all just become musical wallpeper. I occasionally go to a nightclub and hear jungle or drum'n'bass, but it doesn't induce in me the sort of manic pop thrill that I get when I hear e greet rock record on the radio.

Don't you find it ironic that the moment you're moving toward rock is the moment where there's more disaffection with rock than we've seen in years, and more interest in electronic music?
It's *extremely* ironic thet I'd go end make e rock record. And not just a rock record but e reelly obscure rock record. Not to be too errogant or anything, but I think *Animal Rights* is one of the more remerkable records made in a long time. But I don't expect too many people to get it. Not thet it's too sophisticated or complicated; it's just not in the genre that people are interested in right now.

You've spent years mastering electronic music. is it possible you'll always be really good at that, and never as good at rock?
I've always done different types of music. Even now, I still make electronic dance music. At the same time thet I was making *Animal Rights,* I was doing the Voodoo Child record, which wes e reelly quiet electronic record, and I was making house records under different names: Lopez, DJ Cake, end Mario and Roberto Sorrenti. Just for fun—like to sell e thousand copies of a 12" here. It's not like one day I was a dance artist and then a rock artist. I mean, *Everything Is Wrong* was a pretty eclectic record.

If your rock career fails, you could always make a living as a remixer.
Though e lot of times when I do remixes, I set up trade situations rather than get peid for them. Like Billy Corgan owes me a mix of one of my songs; so do Soundgarden. When the guys in Soundgarden esked me to do a mix for them, I sent them three, end I was talking to Chris [Corneil] and Kim [Thayil], end they didn't understand that they owned them. They seid, "We really like the mixes you did for us. What are you going to do with them?" And I seid, "Well, they're yours." And they're like, "What do you mean? You mede them." I was like, "No. It's your song. I just remixed it." And they said, "But it doesn't sound enything like the original."

Speaking of Soundgarden, you just finished a tour opening for them. What do you do to pump yourself up for that kind of a crowd?
It can be difficult to get emotionally involved in music every single night, so I'd do some method-acting tricks that I knew would trigger strong emotional responses. Like I'd imagine my ex-girlfriend having sex with a new boyfriend. Maybe do irreparable psychological damage in the process.



Moby: one hand in his pocket....

Why the nailed-to-a-cross imagery in your live shows? What religious denomination are you?
I'm religious in the sense that when I look at the universe, the scope, the vastness, the intricacy indicates e creator to me, on some level. And in Christ I recognize the best understanding of the human condition that I've ever encountered. My Christianity is based solely on Christ and not on the church, not on Christian culture.

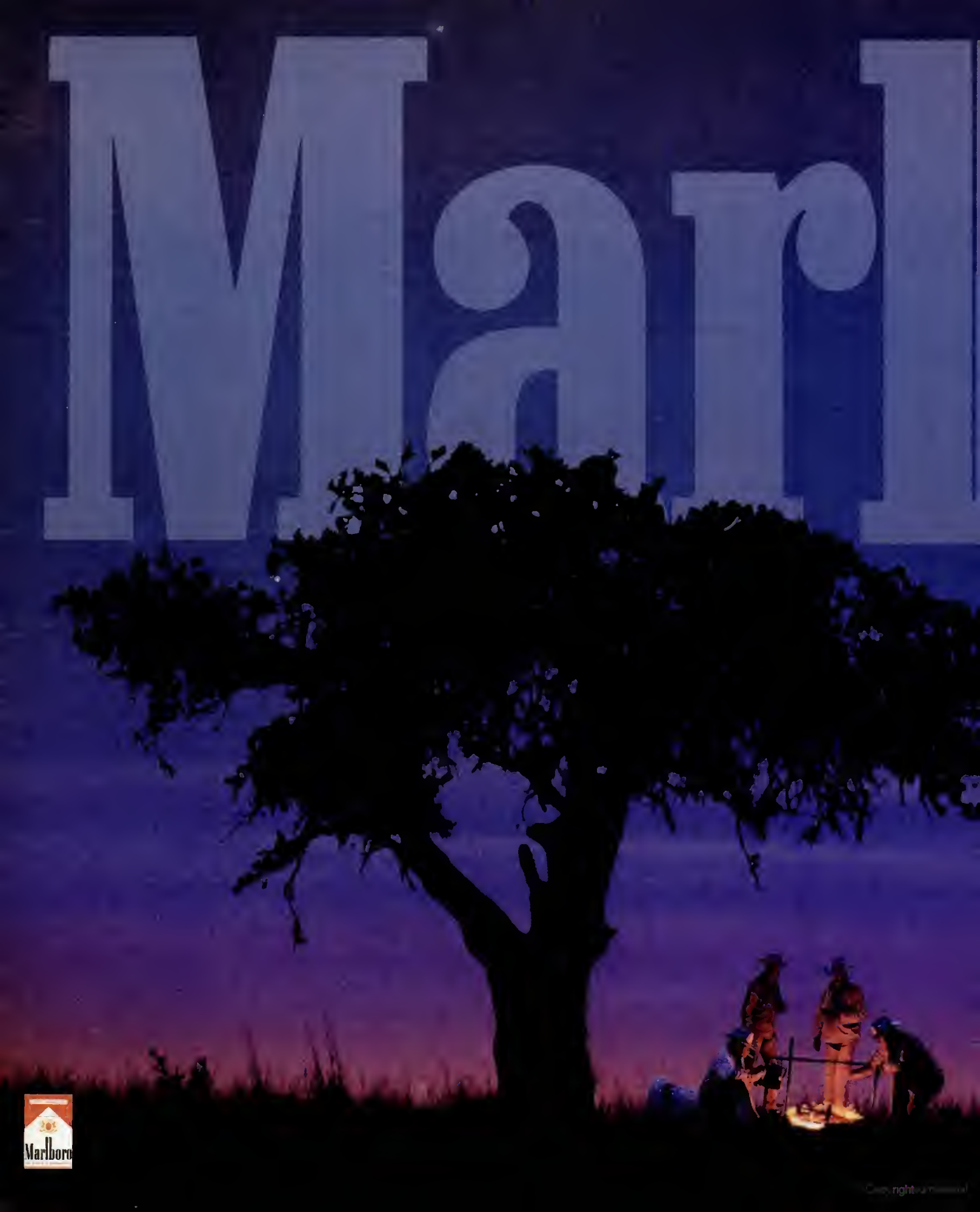
Do you ever find yourself offended when you hang out with other rockers?
No. Hedonism doesn't offend me. Degeneracy doesn't offend me. People ask me: As a Christian, how do you feel ebout the degeneracy of dance culture or of rock culture? As a human being, I find corporate and consumer culture to be way more degenerate and unhealthy than any sort of rock'n'roll hedonism. I like the chaotic rock'n'roll side of things.

Are you comfortable in the rock scene?
More so than in the dance scene. Rock musicians and people in the rock world tend to be a little brighter than people in the dance world. The dance community is pretty myopic. It's focused on dance culture, end that's it. The clothes, the drugs, the clubs. No interests beyond that, except for a dilettantish interest in some New Age stuff.

Has there really been as much anger aimed at you from inside the electronic community as I've read about?
Oh, yeah. I'm en utter perieh. You cen't name an electronic artist that hesn't said something bed ebout me. Leftfield, Orbital, Prodigy, Chemical Brothers, Underworld. Actually, the guys in Underworld didn't really indulge in it. But they're my friends.

What's your next incarnation?
There is a movie being mede now with Patricia Arquette, and they wented me to come and be the music guy. That's ectually my title, I invented it myself, "Music Guy," because normally in movies, it's all very compartmentalized. You have one person who picks the bands, one person who produces the songs, one person who writes the songs, end then one person who writes the score. And I am sort of all of that.

It's a megalomaniac's dream come true.
And megalomania is something I definitely do not have in short supply. ●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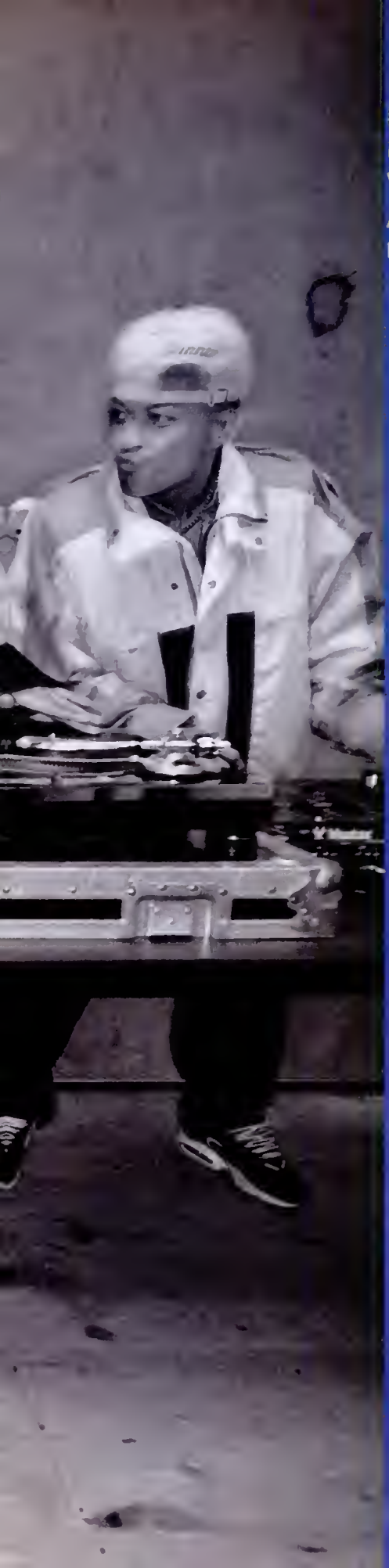
Beat nuts: The Invisible Scratch Pickles, from left, Apollo, Mixmaster Mike, ShortKut, and Q-Bert.



Led by one-man sound lab DJ Shadow, a new generation of Bay Area subversives are wreaking havoc on hip-hop's orthodoxy. **Charles Aaron** reports from rap's indie underground.

Photographs by Stephen Stickler.

TURNING THE TABLES

Sunday-driving a Jeep Grand Cherokee around the sleepy, collegiate streets of his hometown, Davis, California, Josh Davis, a.k.a. DJ Shadow, peers from under a fuzzy beige toboggan cap, and testifies. "I was ten years old and 'The Message' [by Grandmaster Flash and the Furious Five] came on my little clock-radio cube and I immediately rolled over and pressed RECORD on my tape player," says the 24-year-old Davis, his eyes brightening. "My parents were just coming in to say good night and they were like, 'What *is* that?' You can hear me on the tape going, 'Shh, shh.' That song was the most direct form of communication I'd ever heard and it may sound corny, but it changed my life."

The first artist to drift up from the heady ether of hip-hop's independent scene, Shadow is part of a generation—Latino, black, white, Asian—raised on the culture's outskirts. Away from the media scrum and ghettocentric imperative of New York and Los Angeles, these kids fell in love with hip-hop as their let's-change-the-world music, then watched it devolve into gangsta parody. But instead of moping in exile, they hit switches that went beyond G-funk's nowhere ride. Starting labels and spreading the word via college and pirate radio, zines, mix tapes, Web sites, and all-vinyl releases—mostly 12-inch singles and breakbeat albums—they rediscovered the genre's head-spinning cachet.

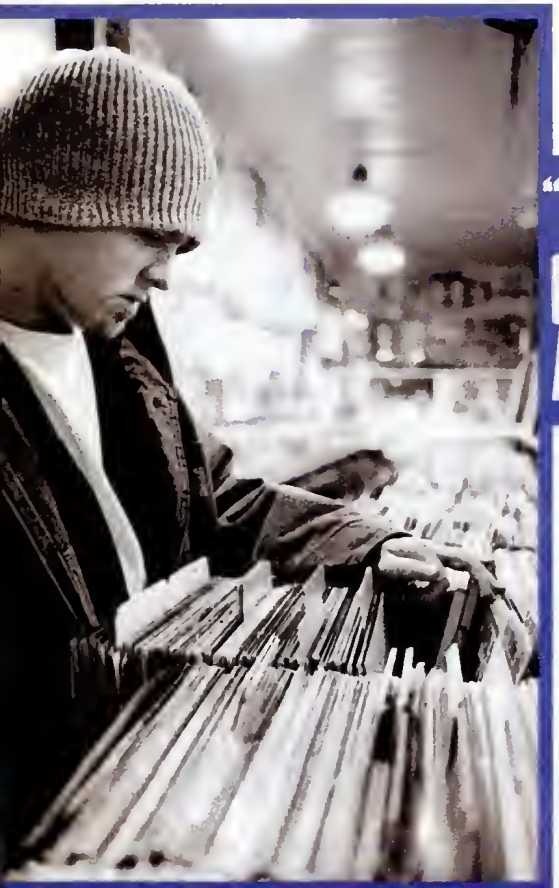
And the cast of characters, particularly in San Francisco's Bay Area, reflects a dizzying mix of ethnicities, styles, and ideas: Shadow and the SoleSides crew, a multiracial collective of inimitable MCs and DJs from the University of California-Davis; the invisible Scratch Pickles—Apollo, Mixmaster Mike, Q-Bert, ShortKut—a Filipino DJ "band" who play turntables, mastering every instrument their needles prick; Dan Nakamura, a.k.a. the Automator, a violin-rocking studio guru, who, along with Ultramegnetic MC "Kool" Keith Thornton, devised the Freudian hip-hop bug-out Dr. Octagon, which also features Scratch Pickle Q-Bert; and Chris Manak, a.k.a. Peanut Butter Wolf, a South Bay DJ/producer whose projects are reminiscent of Shadow's moody, percussive excursions.

While the best hip-hop of the past couple of years has thrived unnoticed underground, Shadow's debut album *Endtroducing* is a rightstartin' message that wants to be heard, even meditated upon. Employing a sampler rather than a rapper as lead voice, it's a disillusioned, yet passionate, fan's notes. One minute he's prying open hip-hop's X-Files and crying, "Ohmigod, look what they've done!" and the next, he's insisting, "But we can make it better!"

As far as hard-core rap cred, Shadow's got three strikes against him—he's white, from the sticks, and big in England (the term "trip-hop" was first applied to his Mo'Wax single "In/Flux"). But his sense of mission is unwavering. "From

sixth grade on, hip-hop was everything to me." Even personal remembrances, like visits with his father in the Bay Area after his parents divorced, are now hip-hop references: "I'd watch these video shows over at his house and I'll never forget seeing a low-budget commercial for UTFO, the Real Roxanne, and Rock Master Scott & the Dynamic 3."

Commiserating with his best friend Stan (a.k.a. Eighth Wonder, who illustrated his first recorded efforts), Shadow immersed himself in hip-hop lore, idolizing Afrika Bambaataa from afar. "It was his whole paradigm of no genre boundaries, playing Kraftwerk next to James Brown next to a children's record. That's why



DJ Shadow and the tools of his trade.

when people ask me about my other favorite types of music, I always say, 'It doesn't work that wey.' Hip-hop is what you do with all the music you hear."

Though New York has a gang of talent—J-Live, Company Flow, Arsonists—many of whom congregate around Stretch Armstrong and Bobbito Garcia's longstanding hip-hop radio show, the Bay Aree is the underground's creative nexus, "a haven for shit-disturbers and misfit toys," as Spearhead's Michael Franti puts it. Listener-supported radio stations like KPFA and KPOO, as well as a dial-full of college stations (KALX, KUSF, KSJS, KZSU) regularly play non-commercial hip-hop. "Different artists can find an audience without having to conform," says Davey "D" Cook, host and former host, respectively, of influential shows on KPFA and KALX.

For instance, the gangsta-rap businessmen—Too Short, E-40, Master P—have sold hundreds of thousands of tapes and CDs independently through savvy street-promotion hustle. "It's created this whole cottage industry that's like, 'Fuck the major labels, let them come to us,' " says Billy "Jam" Kiernan, a 40-ish Irishman who played punk rock on college radio before becoming a Bay Area hip-hop firebrand in the mid-'80s. But there's also room for artistic innovators—Digital Underground, Hieroglyphics (a high-minded talent pool comprising Souls of Mischief, Del tha Funkee Homosapien, Casual, Extra Prolific), and the Coup. Although Digital Underground humpty-schlumped away from Tommy Boy this past year, they also released the biting, wacky *Future Rhythm* for the indie label Critique. And Hieroglyphics, variously signed to Jive and Elektra, plan to release an indie-crew album this year. "Dealing with labels took the fun out of the music," says Hieros' manager-producer Domino. "In essence, they dropped us. But we were like, 'Drop us, please.' "

"FOR US," SAYS INVISIBLE SCRATCH PICKLE Q-BERT, "THE TURNTABLE IS EVERY INSTRUMENT, AND ANY SOUND IS AN INSTRUMENT."

At the moment, the Bay Area's most gifted and emblematic crew may be the Berkeley-based SoleSides—DJ Shadow, Blackalicious (Tim "Gift of Gab" Parker, Xavier "Chief Xcel" Mosley), Tom "Lyrics Born" Shimura and Lateef "The Truth Speaker" Daumont. As students at Cal-Davis, an hour and a half northeast of San Francisco, they were all marooned in a hip-hop-free zone. Until they discovered KDVS, the campus station where Jeff "DJ Zen" Chang, a frustrated activist down from Sacramento, was doing a lively Thursday night shift. Shadow (who had a previous KDVS connection through the repper Paris, an alumnus) constantly called up with requests, Shimura repeatedly won the "Name That Sample" giveaway, and after meeting Shimura in an African-American studies class, Mosley became intrigued. Chang welcomed them down to the studio, end later suggested starting a label.

"We didn't care about waving the independent flag," says Mosley. "It was more like, 'You've got a student-loan check, I've got a student-loan check, let's do this.'" Observes Daumont: "There's all this major-label involvement in New York and L.A., but there's really no industry in the Bay. Nobody's going to discover you lounging on the couch in some boxers."

What's unique about SoleSides is how the group's scattered backgrounds—the Bronx, Arkansas, Salt Lake City, Tokyo, Southern California—translate into complementary styles: Blackalicious the soulful seekers, Shadow the bedroom obsessive, Lyrics Born the drawling eccentric, Lateef the anxious thinker. "Everybody's from different worlds, and that can't help but broaden your horizons, both personally and artistically," says Mosley. The label's first album, *Letyrx*, combines Lateef's muezzin-call intensity with Lyrics Born's alternately moving and absurdist flights to create a unique mingling of musical motivations.

"People here tend to be open-minded," says Shimura. "It's a trip when you have a group like the Invisible Scratch Pickles, then five minutes away you have E-40. There's not a hip-hop phenomenon like that anywhere in the country."

The Invisible Scratch Pickles might be the greatest band in the history of rock'n'roll, but first they have to materialize in the "real" rap world. Strategizing inside their Daly City playhouse/warehouse—basketball goal, foosball, paint-stripped Chevy, graffiti canvases, stage setup with six (!) turntables—Richard "Q-Bert" Quitevis proposes, "How about a line of DJ jewelry, key chains, nail polish?" "Mixmaster" Mike Schwartz chimes in: "Yeah, bedroom slippers, robes, butt plugs, hair glitter. Let's blow this shit up."

To find the cutting edge of so-called "electronica," check "Invasion of the Octopus People" on *Return of the DJ* (*Volume II* is now out) the startling aural lickshot compiled by Devid Paul of the Bay Area zine *The Bomb* in 1995. What you'll hear is the Pickles working their turntables like an extraterrestrial jazz combo, squiggling, scratching, and playing musical chairs—one catches the bass, one the guitar, another the "vocals," now switch—in a performance that's at once farcical and profound.

"It's like we're breaking everything down to a puzzle, scattering it all over the turntable, then piecing it back together right before your eyes," says Schwartz, a ruggedly boyish extrovert. "For us, the turntable is every instrument, and any sound is an instrument," says Quetevis, with a serene, almost delicate confidence. Within the group, explicit musical personalities exist—Q-Bert the ingenious trickster, Mike the bluesy spaceman, ShortKut the energetic juggler, Apollo the sensei-glamorous virtuoso. But together, they instigate a dense soundclash that leaves mere humans grinning in awe.

The group's roots extend back to huge Filipino dances in hotel ballrooms in the early to mid '80s, where as many as ten mobile DJ crews battled it out. What started as a gimmicky trend became a way of life. Now their credits are endless: "Retired" from the DMC (Disco Mix Club)

DJ championships for smoking the competition three years running (1992–94); named honorary "Rock Steady DJs"; assorted breakbeat records, tapes, videos, an upcoming EP/CD-ROM (*The Invisible Scratch Pickles vs. the Clams of Death*); gigs with Branford Marsalis, Bill Laswell, and a host of rappers.

Still, how long does it take before folks take note? "The script's already written; we're just waiting our turn," says "Apollo" Novicio cryptically. "It just takes hella patience, man," says Schwartz. "We've been doing this shit 11 years now, and the only reason we're still in it is because we were born into it. We'll be DJing until we're walking around with canes and white beards and shit."

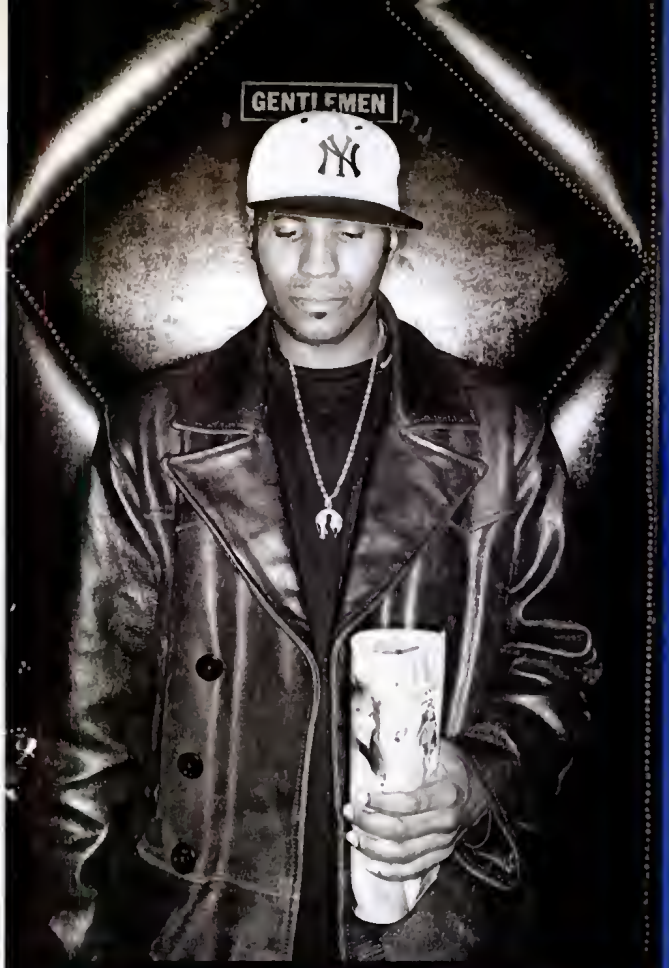
On a bedroom shelf in Chris Menak's modest San Mateo apartment, next to photos of DJ Marley Marl and a duck-walking Malcolm McLaren, sits a small, framed shot of two teenaged friends—one white (Manak), one black, both puffed up with B-boy embition. It was taken almost ten years ago, but the presence of Manak's partner Cherizma, murdered in 1993, still lingers in the room.

"We were so egotistical," says Manak, a.k.a. Peanut Butter Wolf (the tag comes from an ex-girlfriend's little brother's name for the bogeyman). "We did all these demos, all these shows, had Sony and Elektra interested. Then when we signed to Hollywood Basics, we were just, like, total assholes to our A&R. Actually, we were dropped right before Charizma passed away.... I told myself I wasn't going to be in a group with anyone else again."

Now a humble 27-year-old marketing grad from San Jose State, Manak runs his own label, Stones Throw, and is hip-hop buyer et TRC, e key distributor for the indie underground. After his hypnotically flowing indie album *Peanut Butter Breaks* (sampled by Cypress Hill) and "Chronicles (I Will Always Love H.E.R.)," e chop-shop manifesto featured on *Return of the DJ*, Manak's career has perked up. "I'd rather sell 10,000 units of vinyl, build my name, control all aspects of the process, and if somebody comes to me, I'm always open to talk. Artistic freedom is more important to me right now."

One of the refreshing espects of the Bey Area is that so many artists grew up on different hip-hop styles—the latest from New York, West Coast electro-funk, Miami bass, Latin freestyle—their musical interests never became static. Manak has no qualms about putting Cameo and Black Flag on the same mix tape (echoing Shadow's love of Metallica end Depeche Mode). In fact, he may work on some tracks for an English jungle label, using snippets of his teenage punk band, also called Peanut Butter Wolf, which was "basically me and my little brother, yelling at each other."

When major-label hardrocks weary of trashing each other over turf and bitches, it's this crazy-curious hip-hop spirit that remains. Whether it sells is another matter. "People complain how they're tired of hip-hop because of the same old beats and subject metter," says Manak. "Well, independent artists *are* doing something different from ell that. I guess we'll see if people support it, or if it's all just a bunch of talk." ●



Alien in our midst: "Kool" Keith Thornton.

THE DOCTOR IS WAY OUT

Does hip-hop need emergency therapy? Treatment for moose bumps? These questions and more are suggested by the past year's dopest (dopiest?) concept album, *Dr. Octagon*, which unleashes the alter ego of rapper "Kool" Keith Thornton, i.e. *the* "paramedic fetus of the East." Animated by producer Dan Nakamura, a.k.a. the Automator, who rearranges live drums, piano, banjo, clarinet, flute, guitar, and turntables to envision a disorienting "Church of the Operating Room," Thornton pushes Sun Ra and George Clinton's science-fiction funk down a flight of stairs.

"Octagon's like this psycho black-and-white-TV doctor from 1965 visiting the future, which is now, and he sees how things are fucked up, and well, let's put it this way, he's not that interested in taking care of people," says the surprisingly short and sturdy Thornton, sipping soup at a Chinese restaurant in San Francisco's North Beach. He pauses and winks, as the tall, burly Nakamura jumps in. "You ever see those rednecks that get picked up by aliens and nobody listens to them when they get back? *That's* an interesting character, not some drug dealer in a Lexus."

As one of the Bronx-based Ultramagnetic MCs in the late '80s, "Kool Keith" (a.k.a. Big Willie Smith, MC Baldylocks, etc.) was the original abstract rapper, rhyming offbeat about battling himself, bewildering and influencing an auditorium full of MC underclassmen. But Ultramagnetic never hit commercially, and Thornton served a stint in New York's Creedmoor Psychiatric Center for depression. Recently, though, after a deal with Capitol fell through when its black-music department was purged, he's been on a stunning creative binge.

Relocated to Los Angeles, rapping sharper than ever, as well as playing bass and keyboards, Thornton's released two albums (*Dr. Octagon* and *Big Time*, with Tim Dog ["Fuck Compton"] under the name Ultra) and a series of pseudonymous singles (on his Funky Ass label). Plus there's the new *Sex Style* project, a satirical porno foray. He's found a comfort zone working with Nakamura, who's also enjoying an artistic burst—remixes for the Geis and Cornershop, an album with Prince Paul and Mike Simpson of the Dust Brothers, plus an instrumental Octagon remix album.

Still, is anybody ready for all this? "The hardheads who like Biggie Smalls don't get it at all, which is cool," says Nakamura. "It's not like we're *universal*, you know what I'm saying?"

In an underground full of private or idiosyncratic personalities and often oblique, instrumental music, Thornton's rhymes and personae get right up in your face. Of his alter egos, he explains, laughing, "I'm a group within myself. I always wanted to do side projects with myself. I'm doing Octagon right now, but tomorrow I could be 'Harold,' the totally average guy, and record an album called *The Mind of Harold*, about his totally average adventures. I'm like a painted picture, but the paint ain't dry."

Finishing up our dumplings and tea, Thornton flashes a vulnerable, almost childlike grin and suggests we peruse a few "new releases" in the nearby red-light district. "This is where you'll always find me, in the naked section," he cracks. After rating an array of videos—Bogas Bros. doofy slap-and-tickle, pitifully homemade enslavement titles *(Bound and Gagged, Ass Thrasher)*—he strolls out under the Lusty Lady theater marquee.

"Listen," he imparts, "I've been around the world, I've seen shit, I've thrown eggs in hotel rooms in Amsterdam, all that nonsense. But I'm not interested in being a youthful asshole anymore. Now I'm making my own world." **C.A.**

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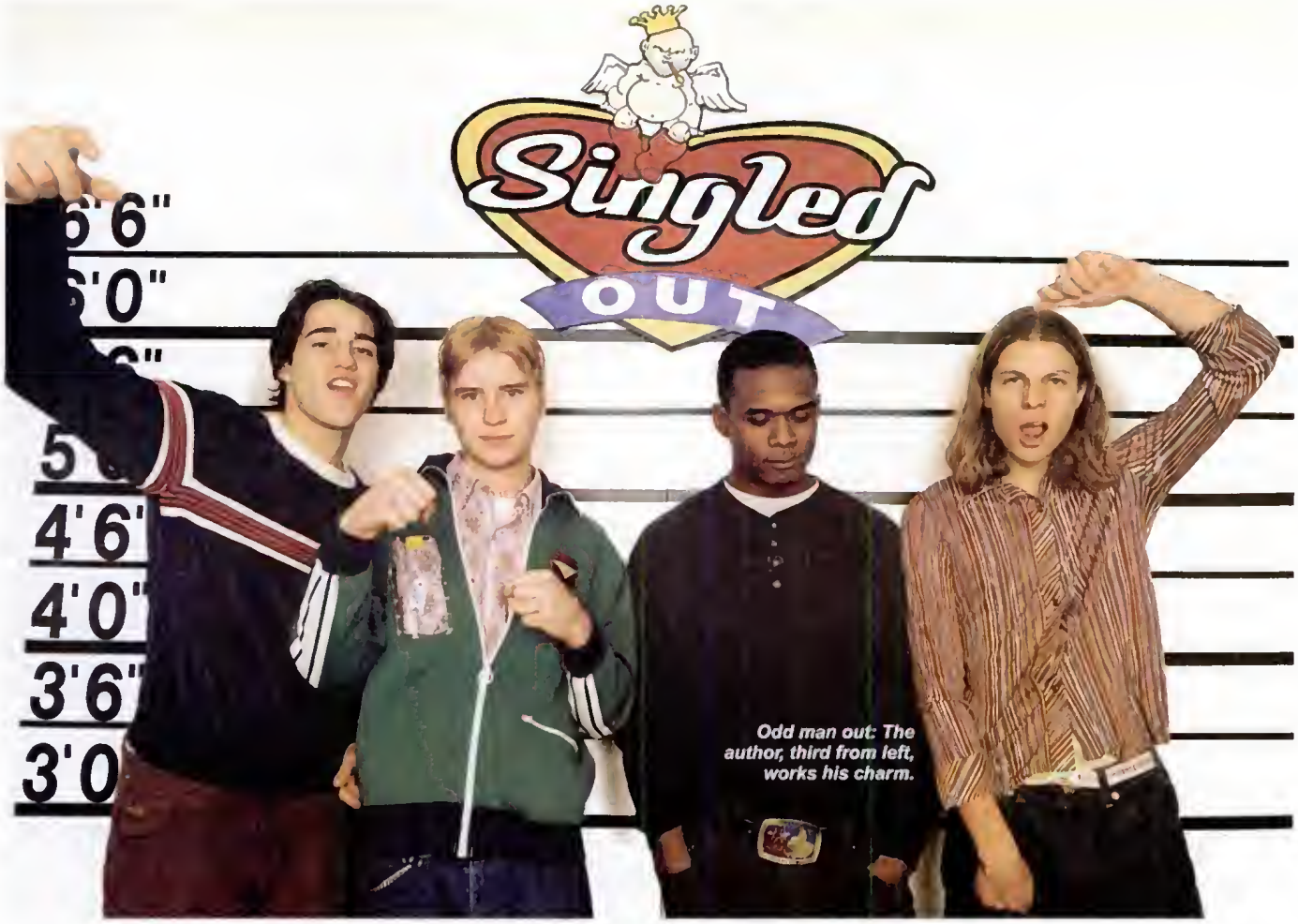

Odd man out: The author, third from left, works his charm.

What does it take to make a love connection on MTV's *Singled Out*? James Hannaham heads back into the closet to uncover the rules of attraction. Photograph by James Smolka.

MEN BEHAVING BADLY

Tuesday, 12:30 P.M. When you don't fit in anywhere, you can go everywhere. It's the first cold day of the year, and I'm standing in one of three lines of people snaking its way out from under the marquee at Manhattan's Webster Hall dance club. I'm here to be a contestant on *Singled Out*, MTV's remade and remodeled version of *The Dating Game*, and—say it loud—I'm black, I'm gay, and I'm proud.

I've made a valiant return to the closet to experience firsthand the only episodes to be taped in New York—including the last three hosted by the *blonde du monde*, Jenny McCarthy. While it must be a crime to stage so much camp in New York City and keep queers out, I'm here with a larger sense of purpose. *Singled Out* fascinates me like a 20-car pileup—the show's get-happy take on modern romance is horrible to watch, but I can't turn away. Maybe if I went undercover, I figured, I could crack MTV's lip-gloss orthodoxy and out their rules of attraction.

But first—the disguise. I'm trying to look like one of the kids I always see skulking around my downtown neighborhood. I've got on oversized Levis and a long, baggy basketball tank top. My persona is a kind of educated homey, an awkward combination of Bill Bellamy and Henry Louis Gates. I've named him Calvin Walker. I realize now I might have made a mistake. At the open call two days ago, the "auditioner" told me, "The look is very hot, very flashy. Dress like you're going to a New York club." I thought *Kids*. But looking around at the thickly made-up women and open-shirted guys, I see everyone else thought *Dirty Dancing*.

Still, there are more important things to worry about. One of the production assistants has just told everyone that "the contestant quota is filled," meaning we either go to the "party pit" (the place for losers with no hope of being contestants) or forever hold our peace. We know we're in for a fight. They've already ejected everyone without ID, as well as everyone under 18 or over 25. I'm 28—fortunately, they can't do math in their heads.

In front of me, a short kid named Justin refuses to accept second-

SET DESIGN, JOSEPH PORCELLI.

class status. He just drove for an hour end a half from Rutgers University in central New Jersey to be here. He gets up in the PA's face, nervously adjusting the brim of his backward-turned baseball cap. "Look," he barks. "I had to switch my schedule around to be here. I had to lie to my professor." "Sorry," snaps the Vulcan PA. Moments earlier, this women had cruelly condemned a pockmarked kid to the pit. "What we need," he'd protested, "is a society without class distinctions." "Well," she'd retorted, "This is New York."

Justin is still going off when suddenly the associate producer appears and, with a wave of his magic clipboard, makes us all guaranteed contestants on tomorrow's tapings. I'm amazed that Justin had the nerve to wig out on a PA like that. But efter all, I'm just curious. Justin's *whole love life* is at stake.

Wednesday, 12 P.M. The next day, as we wait in the foyer, we can hear tha contestents in front of us being "interviewed." One of the questions concerns package size, and thay don't mean FedEx. A tall, geeky guy in front of me, who I notice is wearing blue nail polish, says out loud to his buddies end ma, "Hare's how they judga. I'll bet Chris Herdwick reaches down your pants, and if he likas whet he feels, you're in." It sounds a little like wishful thinking. Ha turns to ma, looking for affirmation. I smile calmly. That's cool, Calvin Walkar would say, but it ein't me. Knowwhatl'msayin'?

1:30 P.M. During the interview—a battery of dumb questions about sex conducted by a guy who looks like Kurt Cobain after a lithium OD—I lie only once. When he asks my group of five guys, "Which of you get laid on the first date?" I decide I'll give womenhood the credit it daserves and hide the fect that I usuelly get laid *before* the first date. But he won't let it drop. "What? You mean you don't get lucky the first time every time?" "Nah," I reply sheepishly. "The ladies wanne go slow, whet can I say?" None of the other guys have the bravado to claim instant-Romeo status either, so I don't fael, well, singlad out. "What are you, in tha band?" ha asks. For *Singled Out*, implying someone's gay is so ridiculous that it's a form of male bonding. Mentally, my inner queen bitch-slaps him.

2:00 P.M. After lunch, in e room full of folding chairs, we get initiated by Richard. He's dark-hairad end musclad, sporting a black tank top and jaans. Thera must ba a convayor belt thet takas guys like this from the dumpsters at Gold's Gym directly to MTV's casting office. Next stop: phys-ed instructor.

He barks at us for about 20 minutes. "Number one rule: Don't touch Jenny!" He yells. "She's a brown belt in karate, she will hit you." The guys laugh. There are plenty of other girls to touch. "Number two: This is a femily show. No cursing. Instead, do things that ere nonverbal. Let's say that. Nonverbal. If you start cursing, someona in Oshkosh hears it, they call up and complein, they cancel the show, I'm out of a job, I'm mugging *you*. Number threa: Don't touch yourself. I know sometimes you guys gotta check to see if it's still there. But don't. I'll never forget, we've still got a video of this guy who was picking his nose, and all of a sudden he realizes the camera's right on him."

2:40 P.M. We have six possible ways to behave and they're ell on cue cerds, held up by Richerd end his minions. QUIET, DANCE, GOLF CLAPS, ENERGY!, CHEER, end my favorite, Go NUTS! Once Richard has taught us how to do this, wa go upstairs. The set looks about es expensive es e Lego village. Everything's made of balsa wood, including the "prison cage" (a special set piece for the New York episodes that resembles something out of *Planet of the Apes*) designated for ell the unpicked suitors. I stand a few rows into the alternating chunks of guys and girls. To our left and right, the party pitters sit with food-coloring drinks—hey, I think, they don't look like the Elephant Man at ell!

Then Richard introduces Jenny. "Ladies and gentlemen, the gorgeous and talented Miss Jenny McCarthy!" Jenny jogs out from the wings, in a swirly green end white top, mike in hand. Sha looks a lot like the cartoon of Elizabeth Montgomary from *Bewitched*'s titla sequence. She's allowed to touch us, so she aggressivaly high-fives end shekes hands with ell of us. Like tha naw girl who immediately conquers the popular crowd, tha girls start looking up to her. When one of the male pickers mekes e sexist comment, sha rolls har eyas and seys, "Coma onl" not reelizing that the camera is on her. Thay have to redo the shot, but sha's won the women over.

Meanwhile, Chris Hardwick's subdued persona only seems to worsen off-camera. He's the butt of jokes all the time. Richard adds a rule: "Touch Chris!" Ha looks down constantly, wrings his hands, and doesn't klatch. In short, he acts much mora human then McCarthy, whose guard rarely comes down. One of the female contestants has brought Hardwick roses and reads him e little nota from her girlfriends about how adorabla they find him. He seems sincerely touched. Richard makes e snide commant. McCerthy doasn't say enything. The moment doesn't wind up on camera.

5:00 P.M. During the second show, I get tossed into the caga for being a "MetroCard," i.e., the kind of guy who measures his relationships in months rethar than baars. We pess in front of the girl, a leggy blonda not fer from Janny's McCarthyism, plaading for tha "golden ticket." (If sha gives us har ticket, we eutomatically get to round two.) Justin flashes a hopeful grin at her as we go by. I do my best Mars Blackmon as I pass the picker—"Please baby baby baby please!"—but no luck. I've chosen a spot in the back of the cage full of guys for a better view. Justin and his friends are up front, watching and strategizing. "Next time," one of them says, "wa should just stay out there."

The longer you stay—and you can't leave without e good excuse—the more *Singled Out* seems like an experiment in sociatal control, a *Logan's Run* of dating or *Franz Kafka*'s *Love Connection*. We're captive for however long it takes to tape three apisodes, which turns out to be ebout six hours. Jenny's outfit is the only thing that changes. We get two breaks, one for burgers and water, another just for water. For one of the second-round challenges, three girls have to garnish hot dogs for the picker. (Freud, MTV-stylel) When thay bring out the frenks, the crowd spontaneously cries, "Hot dogs!" But ultimately, no ona gets to eat them. They're just for show.

The blonde leading the blind: Jenny McCarthy.

7:00 P.M. So far, I havan't had much luck. Neither hes Justin. The first tima wa were out on the first question. The second time too. This round, we've gotten past the first query, and Chris is about to ask the second quastion. "Do you like guys who are happy or depressed?" But when Kurt No-Brain esked us the corresponding quastion aarlier, it wes "How many times a week do you go out?" One answer, "Les Miserables," meant we went clubbing a lot. Another, "Upbeat," maent we steyed home and did naedlepoint. I'm beginning to think we've been dupad. "I don't want to be with anyone who's depressed," the babe says. "So let's get rid of 'Les Miserables.' " We're incarcerated again.

9:15 P.M. It's finally over. At the coet check, the guys haven't given up, even though everyona's "gone nuts" as instructed end is completely drained. I step aside es Justin and his buddies eagerly try to get a rap with some of the women—"Hey, didn't I see you at the Tunnel?" "Yeah, I used to work there...."

During the show, my sexuel orientetion didn't matter, es long as I played the game. Now that the real dating game hes started, I feel more like en actuel loser. I've put in nine hours of herd work—you try shouting "woof" for six hours straight—and gotten diddley. No on-camera speaking, no door prizes, no hugs from Jenny McCarthy, no closeted boyfriend. Plus, that last question left me feeling thet it's not just chance that *Singled Out*'s love connections all look so picture perfect. But hey, I've laarned my lesson. Next time I dive into the gene pool, I'll do it someplace where I can at least pretend I'm bisexual. Like *The Reel World*. ●

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BRIEF SUMMARY

VALTREX®
(valacyclovir hydrochloride)
Caplets

The following is a brief summary only; see full prescribing information for complete product information.

CONTRAINDICATIONS: VALTREX is contraindicated in patients with a known hypersensitivity or intolerance to valacyclovir, acyclovir, or any component of the formulation.

WARNINGS: Thrombotic thrombocytopenic purpura/hemolytic uremic syndrome (TTP/HUS), in some cases resulting in death, has occurred in patients with advanced HIV disease and also in allogeneic bone marrow transplant and renal transplant recipients participating in clinical trials of VALTREX at doses of 8 grams per day.

PRECAUTIONS: The efficacy of VALTREX has not been established for the treatment of disseminated herpes zoster, or suppression of recurrent genital herpes, or in immunocompromised patients.

Dosage adjustment is recommended when administering VALTREX to patients with renal impairment (see DOSAGE AND ADMINISTRATION section of full prescribing information). Caution should also be exercised when administering VALTREX to patients receiving potentially nephrotoxic agents since this may increase the risk of renal dysfunction and/or the risk of reversible central nervous system symptoms such as those that have been reported in patients treated with intravenous acyclovir.

Information for Patients: ***Herpes Zoster:*** There are no data on treatment initiated more than 72 hours after onset of the zoster rash. Patients should be advised to initiate treatment as soon as possible after a diagnosis of herpes zoster.

Genital Herpes: Patients should be informed that VALTREX is not a cure for genital herpes. There are no data evaluating whether VALTREX will prevent transmission of infection to others. Because genital herpes is a sexually transmitted disease, patients should avoid contact with lesions or intercourse when lesions and/or symptoms are present to avoid infecting partners. Genital herpes can also be transmitted in the absence of symptoms through asymptomatic viral shedding. If medical management of a genital herpes recurrence is indicated, patients should be advised to initiate therapy at the first sign or symptom of an episode.

There are no data on the effectiveness of treatment initiated more than 72 hours after the onset of signs and symptoms of a first episode of genital herpes or more than 24 hours of the onset of signs and symptoms of a recurrent episode.

Drug Interactions: An additive increase in acyclovir AUC and C_{max} was observed when VALTREX was administered to healthy volunteers who were taking cimetidine, probenecid, or a combination of both cimetidine and probenecid (see CLINICAL PHARMACOLOGY: Pharmacokinetics section of full prescribing information).

Carcinogenesis, Mutagenesis, Impairment of Fertility: The data presented below include references to the steady-state acyclovir AUC observed in humans treated with 1 g VALTREX given orally three times a day to treat herpes zoster. Plasma drug concentrations in animal studies are expressed as multiples of human exposure to acyclovir (see CLINICAL PHARMACOLOGY: Pharmacokinetics section of full prescribing information).

Valacyclovir was noncarcinogenic in lifetime carcinogenicity bioassays at single daily doses (gavage) of up to 120 mg/kg/day for mice and 100 mg/kg/day for rats. There was no significant difference in the incidence of tumors between treated and control animals, nor did valacyclovir shorten the latency of tumors. Plasma concentrations of acyclovir were equivalent to human levels in the mouse bioassay and 1.4 to 2.3 times human levels in the rat bioassay.

Valacyclovir was tested in five genetic toxicity assays. An Ames assay was negative in the absence or presence of metabolic activation. Also negative were an in vitro cytogenetic study with human lymphocytes and a rat cytogenetic study at a single oral dose of 3000 mg/kg (8 to 9 times human plasma levels).

In the mouse lymphoma assay, valacyclovir was negative in the absence of metabolic activation. In the presence of metabolic activation (76% to 88% conversion to acyclovir), valacyclovir was weakly mutagenic.

A mouse micronucleus assay was negative at 250 mg/kg but weakly positive at 500 mg/kg (acyclovir concentrations 26 to 51 times human plasma levels).

Valacyclovir did not impair fertility or reproduction in rats at 200 mg/kg/day (6 times human plasma levels).

Pregnancy: ***Teratogenic Effects:*** Pregnancy Category B. Valacyclovir was not teratogenic in rats or rabbits given 400 mg/kg (which results in exposures of 10 and 7 times human plasma levels, respectively) during the period of major organogenesis. There are no adequate and well-controlled studies of VALTREX or ZOVIRAX in pregnant women. A prospective epidemiologic registry of acyclovir use during pregnancy has been ongoing since 1984. As of December 1994, outcomes of live births have been documented in 380 women exposed to systemic acyclovir during the first trimester of pregnancy. The occurrence rate of birth defects approximates that found in the general population. However, the small size of the registry is insufficient to evaluate the risk for less common defects or to permit reliable and definitive conclusions regarding the safety of acyclovir in pregnant women and their developing fetuses. VALTREX should be used during pregnancy only if the potential benefit justifies the potential risk to the fetus.

Pregnancy Exposure Registry: To monitor maternal-fetal outcomes of pregnant women exposed to VALTREX, Glaxo Wellcome Inc. maintains a Valacyclovir in Pregnancy Registry. Physicians are encouraged to register their patients by calling (800) 722-9292, ext. 39437.

Nursing Mothers: There is no experience with VALTREX. However, acyclovir concentrations have been documented in breast milk in two women following oral administration of ZOVIRAX and ranged from 0.6 to 4.1 times corresponding plasma levels. These concentrations would potentially expose the nursing infant to a dose of acyclovir as high as 0.3 mg/kg/day. VALTREX should be administered to a nursing mother with caution and only when indicated.

Pediatric Use: Safety and effectiveness of VALTREX in pediatric patients have not been established.

Geriatric Use: Of the total number of patients included in clinical studies of VALTREX, 810 were age 65 or older, and 339 were age 75 or older. A total of 34 volunteers age 65 or older completed a pharmacokinetic trial of VALTREX. The pharmacokinetics of acyclovir following single- and multiple-dose oral administration of VALTREX in geriatric volunteers varied with renal function. Dosage reduction may be required in geriatric patients, depending on the underlying renal status of the patient (see CLINICAL PHARMACOLOGY and DOSAGE AND ADMINISTRATION sections of full prescribing information).

ADVERSE REACTIONS: The adverse events reported by greater than 2% of a given treatment group in clinical trials of VALTREX are listed in Table 1.

Table 1
Incidence (%) of Adverse Events in Herpes Zoster and Genital Herpes Study Populations

	Herpes Zoster			Genital Herpes			
Adverse Event	VALTREX 1 g tid (n=967)	ZOVIRAX 800 mg 5x daily (n=376)	Placebo (n=195)	VALTREX 1 g bid (n=1,194)	VALTREX 500 mg bid (n=359)	ZOVIRAX 200 mg 5x daily (n=822)	Placebo (n=439)
Nausea	15	19	8	6	6	7	8
Headache	14	13	12	16	17	12	14
Vomiting	6	8	3	1	1	2	<1
Diarrhea	5	7	6	4	5	3	6
Constipation	4	5	3	<1	1	1	1
Asthenia	4	5	4	2	1	2	4
Dizziness	3	6	2	3	2	2	3
Abdominal Pain	3	3	2	2	3	2	3
Anorexia	2	3	2	<1	<1	<1	<1

OVERDOSAGE: There have been no reports of overdosage from the administration of VALTREX. However, it is known that precipitation of acyclovir in renal tubules may occur when the solubility (2.5 mg/mL) is exceeded in the intratubular fluid. In the event of acute renal failure and anuria, the patient may benefit from hemodialysis until renal function is restored (see DOSAGE AND ADMINISTRATION).

U.S. Patent No. 4,957,924 RL-369 October 1996

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Research Triangle Park, NC 27709

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ZOVIRAX® Capsules
ZOVIRAX® Tablets
ZOVIRAX® Suspension
(acyclovir)

BRIEF SUMMARY

The following is a brief summary only; see full prescribing information for complete product information, including references.

CONTRAINDICATIONS: ZOVIRAX Capsules, Tablets, and Suspension are contraindicated for patients who develop hypersensitivity or intolerance to the components of the formulations.

WARNINGS: ZOVIRAX Capsules, Tablets, and Suspension are intended for oral ingestion only.

PRECAUTIONS:

General: ZOVIRAX has caused decreased spermatogenesis at high parenteral doses in some animals and mutagenesis in some acute studies at high concentrations of drug (see PRECAUTIONS: Carcinogenesis, Mutagenesis, Impairment of Fertility). The recommended dosage should not be exceeded (see DOSAGE AND ADMINISTRATION section of full prescribing information).

Exposure of herpes simplex and varicella-zoster isolates to acyclovir in vitro can lead to the emergence of less sensitive viruses. The possibility of the appearance of less sensitive viruses in humans must be borne in mind when treating patients. The relationship between the in vitro sensitivity of herpes simplex or varicella-zoster virus to acyclovir and clinical response to therapy has yet to be established (see CLINICAL PHARMACOLOGY: Microbiology section of full prescribing information).

Because of the possibility that less sensitive virus may be selected in patients who are receiving acyclovir, all patients should be advised to take particular care to avoid potential transmission of virus if active lesions are present while they are on therapy. In severely immunocompromised patients, the physician should be aware that prolonged or repeated courses of acyclovir may result in selection of resistant viruses which may not fully respond to continued acyclovir therapy.

Caution should be exercised when administering ZOVIRAX to patients receiving potentially nephrotoxic agents since this may increase the risk of renal dysfunction.

Information for Patients: Patients are instructed to consult with their physician if they experience severe or troublesome adverse reactions, they become pregnant or intend to become pregnant, they intend to breastfeed while taking orally administered ZOVIRAX, or they have any other questions.

Genital Herpes Infections: Genital herpes is a sexually transmitted disease and patients should avoid intercourse when visible lesions are present because of the risk of infecting intimate partners. ZOVIRAX Capsules, Tablets, and Suspension are for oral ingestion only. Medication should not be shared with others. The prescribed dosage should not be exceeded. ZOVIRAX does not eliminate latent viruses. Patients are instructed to consult with their physician if they do not receive sufficient relief in the frequency and severity of their genital herpes recurrences.

There are still unanswered questions concerning reproductive/gonadal toxicity and mutagenesis; long-term studies are continuing. Decreased sperm production has been seen at high doses in some animals, a placebo-controlled clinical study using 400 mg or 1000 mg of ZOVIRAX per day for 6 months in humans did not show similar findings. Chromosomal breaks were seen in vitro after brief exposure to high concentrations. Some other currently marketed medications also cause chromosomal breaks, and the significance of this finding is unknown. A placebo-controlled clinical study using 800 mg of ZOVIRAX per day for 1 year in humans did not show any abnormalities in structure or number of chromosomes.

Herpes Zoster Infections: Adults age 50 or older tend to have more severe shingles, and treatment with ZOVIRAX showed more significant benefit for older patients. Treatment was begun within 72 hours of rash onset in these studies, and was more useful if started within the first 48 hours.

Chickenpox: Although chickenpox in otherwise healthy children is usually a self-limited disease of mild to moderate severity, adolescents and adults tend to have more severe disease. Treatment was initiated within 24 hours of the typical chickenpox rash in the controlled studies, and there is no information regarding the effects of treatment begun later in the disease course. It is unknown whether the treatment of chickenpox in childhood has any effect on long-term immunity. However, there is no evidence to indicate that treatment of chickenpox with ZOVIRAX would have any effect on either decreasing or increasing the incidence or severity of subsequent recurrences of herpes zoster (shingles) later in life. Intravenous ZOVIRAX is indicated for the treatment of varicella-zoster infections in immunocompromised patients.

Drug Interactions: Co-administration of probenecid with intravenous acyclovir has been shown to increase the mean half-life and the area under the concentration-time curve. Urinary excretion and renal clearance were correspondingly reduced. The clinical effects of this combination have not been studied.

Carcinogenesis, Mutagenesis, Impairment of Fertility: The data presented below include references to peak steady-state plasma acyclovir concentrations observed in humans treated with 800 mg given orally 5 times a day (dosing appropriate for treatment of herpes zoster) or 200 mg given orally 5 times a day (dosing appropriate for treatment of genital herpes). Plasma drug concentrations in animal studies are expressed as multiples of human exposure to acyclovir at the higher and lower dosing schedules (see CLINICAL PHARMACOLOGY: Pharmacokinetics section of full prescribing information).

Acyclovir was tested in lifetime bioassays in rats and mice at single daily doses of up to 450 mg/kg administered by gavage. There was no statistically significant difference in the incidence of tumors between treated and control animals, nor did acyclovir shorten the latency of tumors. At 450 mg/kg/day, plasma concentrations were 3 to 6 times human levels in the mouse bioassay and 1 to 2 times human levels in the rat bioassay.

Acyclovir was tested in two in vitro cell transformation assays. Positive results were observed at the highest concentration tested (31 to 63 times human levels) in one system and the resulting morphologically transformed cells formed tumors when inoculated into immunosuppressed, syngeneic, weanling mice. Acyclovir was negative (40 to 80 times human levels) in the other, possibly less sensitive, transformation assay.

In acute cytogenetic studies, there was an increase, though not statistically significant, in the incidence of chromosomal damage at maximum tolerated parenteral doses of acyclovir (100 mg/kg) in rats (62 to 125 times human levels) but not in Chinese hamsters; higher doses of 500 and 1000 mg/kg were clastogenic in Chinese hamsters (380 to 760 times human levels). In addition, no activity was found after 5 days dosing in a dominant lethal study in mice (36 to 73 times human levels). In all 4 microbial assays, no evidence of mutagenicity was observed. Positive results were obtained in 2 of 7 genetic toxicity assays using mammalian cells in vitro. In human lymphocytes, a positive response for chromosomal damage was seen at concentrations 150 to 300 times the acyclovir plasma levels achieved in humans. At one locus in mouse lymphoma cells, mutagenicity was observed at concentrations 250 to 500 times human plasma levels. Results in the other five mammalian cell loci follow: at 3 loci in a Chinese hamster ovary cell line, the results were inconclusive at concentrations at least 1850 times human levels; at 2 other loci in mouse lymphoma cells, no evidence of mutagenicity was observed at concentrations at least 1500 times human levels.

Acyclovir has not been shown to impair fertility or reproduction in mice (450 mg/kg/day, p.o.) or in rats (25 mg/kg/day, s.c.). In the mouse study, plasma levels were 9 to 18 times human levels, while in the rat study they were 8 to 15 times human levels. At a higher dose in the rat (50 mg/kg/day, s.c.), there was a statistically significant increase in post-implantation loss, but no concomitant decrease in litter size. In female rabbits treated subcutaneously with acyclovir subsequent to mating, there was a statistically significant decrease in implantation efficiency but no concomitant decrease in litter size at a dose of 50 mg/kg/day (16 to 31 times human levels). No effect upon implantation efficiency was observed when the same dose was administered intravenously (53 to 106 times human levels). In a rat peri- and postnatal study at 50 mg/kg/day s.c. (11 to 22 times human levels), there was a statistically significant decrease in the group mean numbers of corpora lutea, total implantation sites, and live fetuses in the F_1 generation. Although not statistically significant, there was also a dose-related decrease in group mean numbers of live fetuses and implantation sites at 12.5 mg/kg/day and 25 mg/kg/day, s.c. The intravenous administration of 100 mg/kg/day, a dose known to cause obstructive nephropathy in rabbits, caused a significant increase in fetal resorptions and a corresponding decrease in litter size (plasma levels were not measured). However, at a maximum tolerated intravenous dose of 50 mg/kg/day in rabbits (53 to 106 times human levels), no drug-related reproductive effects were observed.

Intraperitoneal doses of 80 or 320 mg/kg/day acyclovir given to rats for 6 and 1 months, respectively, caused testicular atrophy. Plasma levels were not measured in the 1-month study and were 24 to 48 times human levels in the 6-month study. Testicular atrophy was persistent through the 4-week postdose recovery phase after 320 mg/kg/day; some evidence of recovery of sperm production was evident 30 days postdose. Intravenous doses of 100 and 200 mg/kg/day acyclovir given to dogs for 31 days caused aspermatogenesis. At 100 mg/kg/day plasma levels were 47 to 94 times human levels, while at 200 mg/kg/day they were 159 to 317 times human levels. No testicular abnormalities were seen in dogs given 50 mg/kg/day i.v. for 1 month (21 to 41 times human levels) and in dogs given 60 mg/kg/day orally for 1 year (6 to 12 times human levels).

Pregnancy: ***Teratogenic Effects:*** Pregnancy Category C. Acyclovir was not teratogenic in the mouse (450 mg/kg/day, p.o.), rabbit (50 mg/kg/day, s.c. and i.v.), or in standard tests in the rat (50 mg/kg/day, s.c.). These exposures resulted in plasma levels 9 and 18, 18 and 106, and 11 and 22 times, respectively, human levels. In a non-standard test in rats, there were fetal abnormalities, such as head and tail anomalies, and maternal toxicity. In this test, rats were given 3 s.c. doses of 100 mg/kg acyclovir on gestation day 10, resulting in plasma levels 63 and 125 times human levels. There are no adequate and well-controlled studies in pregnant women. Acyclovir should not be used during pregnancy unless the potential benefit justifies the potential risk to the fetus. Although acyclovir was not teratogenic in standard animal studies, the drug's potential for causing chromosome breaks at high concentration should be taken into consideration in making this determination.

Pregnancy Exposure Registry: To monitor maternal-fetal outcomes of pregnant women exposed to systemic acyclovir, Glaxo Wellcome Inc. maintains an Acyclovir in Pregnancy Registry. Physicians are encouraged to register patients by calling (800) 722-9292, ext. 58465.

Nursing Mothers: Acyclovir concentrations have been documented in breast milk in two women following oral administration of ZOVIRAX and ranged from 0.6 to 4.1 times corresponding plasma levels. These concentrations would potentially expose the nursing infant to a dose of acyclovir up to 0.3 mg/kg/day. Caution should be exercised when ZOVIRAX is administered to a nursing woman.

Pediatric Use: Safety and effectiveness in children less than 2 years of age have not been adequately studied.

ADVERSE REACTIONS:

Herpes Simplex: ***Short-Term Administration:*** The most frequent adverse events reported during clinical trials of treatment of genital herpes with orally administered ZOVIRAX were nausea and/or vomiting in 8 of 298 patient treatments (2.7%) and headache in 2 of 298 (0.6%). Nausea and/or vomiting occurred in 2 of 287 (0.7%) patients who received placebo.

Less frequent adverse events, each of which occurred in 1 of 298 patient treatments with orally administered ZOVIRAX (0.3%), included diarrhea, dizziness, anorexia, fatigue, edema, skin rash, leg pain, inguinal adenopathy, medication taste, and sore throat.

Long-Term Administration: The most frequent adverse events reported in a clinical trial for the prevention of recurrences with continuous administration of 400 mg (two 200 mg capsules) 2 times daily for 1 year in 586 patients treated with ZOVIRAX were: nausea (4.8%), diarrhea (2.4%), headache (1.9%), and rash (1.7%). The 589 control patients receiving intermittent treatment of recurrences with ZOVIRAX for 1 year reported diarrhea (2.7%), nausea (2.4%), headache (2.2%), and rash (1.5%).

The most frequent adverse events reported during the second year by 390 patients who elected to continue daily administration of 400 mg (two 200 mg capsules) 2 times daily for 2 years were headache (1.5%), rash (1.3%), and paresthesia (0.6%). Adverse events reported by 329 patients during the third year included asthenia (1.2%), paresthesia (1.2%), and headache (0.9%).

Herpes Zoster: The most frequent adverse events reported during three clinical trials of treatment of herpes zoster (shingles) with 800 mg of oral ZOVIRAX 5 times daily for 7 to 10 days in 323 patients were: malaise (11.5%), nausea (8.0%), headache (5.9%), vomiting (2.5%), diarrhea (1.5%), and constipation (0.9%). The 323 placebo recipients reported malaise (11.1%), nausea (11.5%), headache (11.1%), vomiting (2.5%), diarrhea (0.3%), and constipation (2.4%).

Chickenpox: The most frequent adverse events reported during three clinical trials of treatment of chickenpox with oral ZOVIRAX in 495 patients were: diarrhea (3.2%), abdominal pain (0.6%), rash (0.6%), vomiting (0.6%), and flatulence (0.4%). The 498 patients receiving placebo reported: diarrhea (2.2%), flatulence (0.8%), and insomnia (0.4%).

Observed During Clinical Practice: Based on clinical practice experience in patients treated with oral ZOVIRAX in the U.S., spontaneously reported adverse events are uncommon. Data are insufficient to support an estimate of their incidence or to establish causation. These events may also occur as part of the underlying disease process. Voluntary reports of adverse events which have been received since market introduction include:

General: fever, headache, pain, peripheral edema, and rarely, anaphylaxis.

Nervous: confusion, dizziness, hallucinations, paresthesia, somnolence (These symptoms may be marked, particularly in older adults.)

Digestive: diarrhea, elevated liver function tests, gastrointestinal distress, nausea

Hemic and Lymphatic: leukopenia, lymphadenopathy

Musculoskeletal: myalgia

Skin: alopecia, pruritus, rash, urticaria

Special Senses: visual abnormalities

Urogenital: elevated creatinine

OVERDOSAGE: Patients have ingested intentional overdoses of up to 100 capsules (20 g) of ZOVIRAX, with no unexpected adverse effects.

Precipitation of acyclovir in renal tubules may occur when the solubility (2.5 mg/mL) in the intratubular fluid is exceeded. Renal lesions considered to be related to obstruction of renal tubules by precipitated drug crystals occurred in the following species: rats treated with i.v. and i.p. doses of 20 mg/kg/day for 21 and 31 days, respectively, and at s.c. doses of 100 mg/kg/day for 10 days; rabbits at s.c. and i.v. doses of 50 mg/kg/day for 13 days; and dogs at i.v. doses of 100 mg/kg/day for 31 days. A 6-hour hemodialysis results in a 60% decrease in plasma acyclovir concentration. Data concerning peritoneal dialysis are incomplete but indicate that this method may be significantly less efficient in removing acyclovir from the blood. In the event of acute renal failure and anuria, the patient may benefit from hemodialysis until renal function is restored (see DOSAGE AND ADMINISTRATION section of full prescribing information).

U.S. Patent No. 4199574

March 1996

GlaxoWellcome
Glaxo Wellcome Inc.
Research Triangle Park, NC 27709

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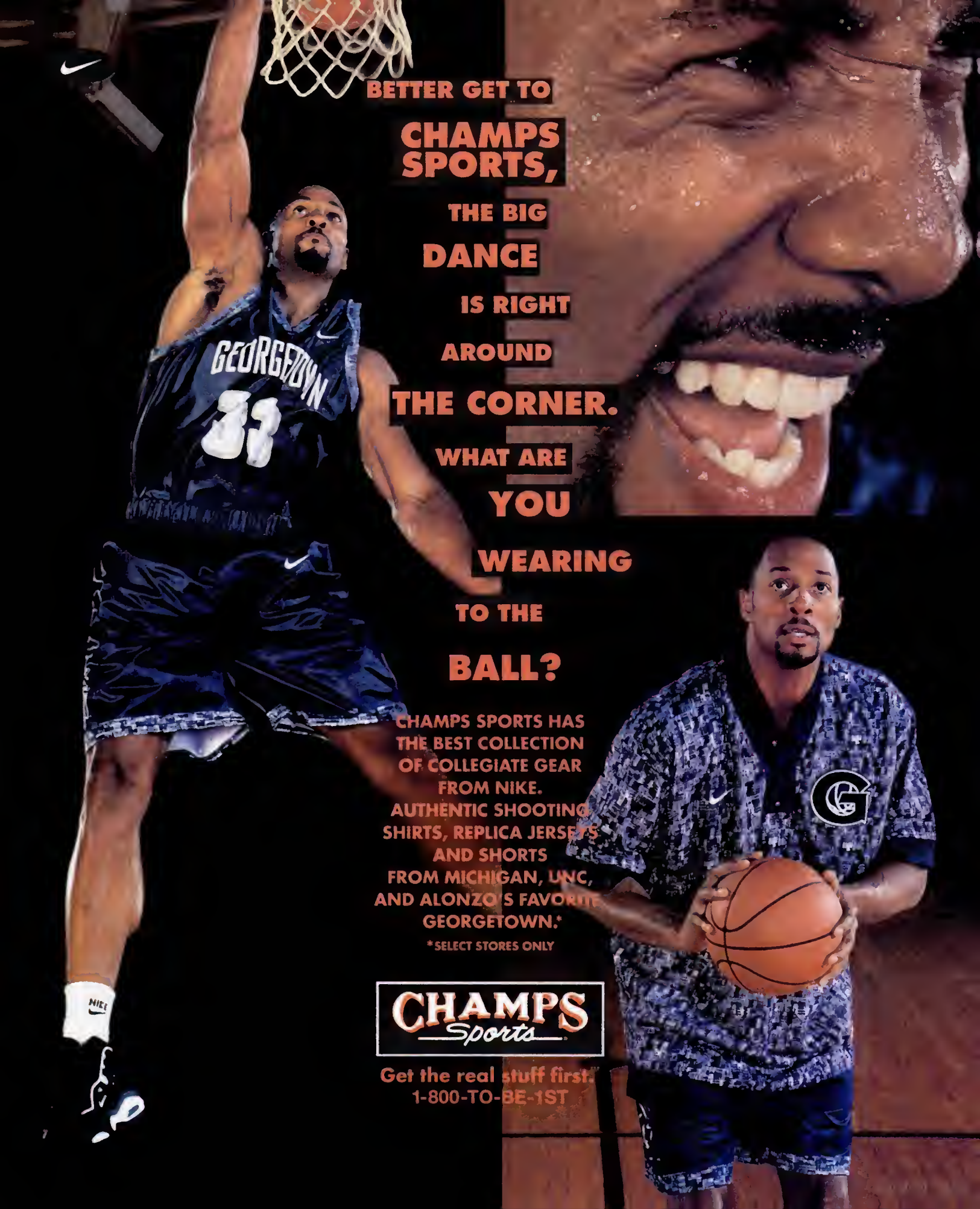
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GiMME HiNDi ROCK

Hip-hop meets Indian pop in New York City's South Asian culture club.

Photographs by Roxanne Lowit.

T-shirt by Hysteric Glamour; pleather jeans by David Dalrymple for Field. Where to Buy, page 114.

FASHION EDITOR, JILL SWID; STYLIST, LYSA COOPER; HAIR, CHUCK AMOS; MAKEUP, SHADÉ/RICKY'S.

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Sitting inside New York City's Planet 28 nightclub, DJ Jay Dabhi (a.k.a. Lil Jay) is explaining how he stumbles upon the Indian samples that end up in his mixes. "I don't even speak Hindi," confesses the 20-year-old Queens native. "I pick up the indian music from cable TV or my mom's records, and play whatever sounds nice." The result is a groove-heavy collage of Bombay disco, Hindi pop, rap, and techno called Hindi Remix. A sound that started with a dozen or so like-minded DJs pirating beats in their basements, it's now the nerve center of New York City's thriving South Asian club circuit.

The *desi* scene (Hindi for homeboy or homegirl) sprang up in the early '90s when a group of second-generation Indian-American kids bored with the parent-sanctioned Indian community dances in Queens began throwing their own parties at rented nightclubs and warehouses. The gatherings look like a typical hip-hop show, with crowds of kids in B-boy Tommy Hilfiger and "Get It Girl!" shimmy wear, but instead of shouting out for the Wu-Tang Clan, the sweating masses get down to samples of Madonna wailing over a mixed-in sitar.

Lil Jay—a business student at St. John's University in Queens, New York, by day ("If DJing doesn't work out, there's always Wall Street")—hopes the scene will blow up as he and other DJs start turning out less sample-dependent, more commercial mixes, but in the meantime, he's just glad he has clubs to play in. Says Jay: "At least I don't have to spin the Sweet 16s anymore."

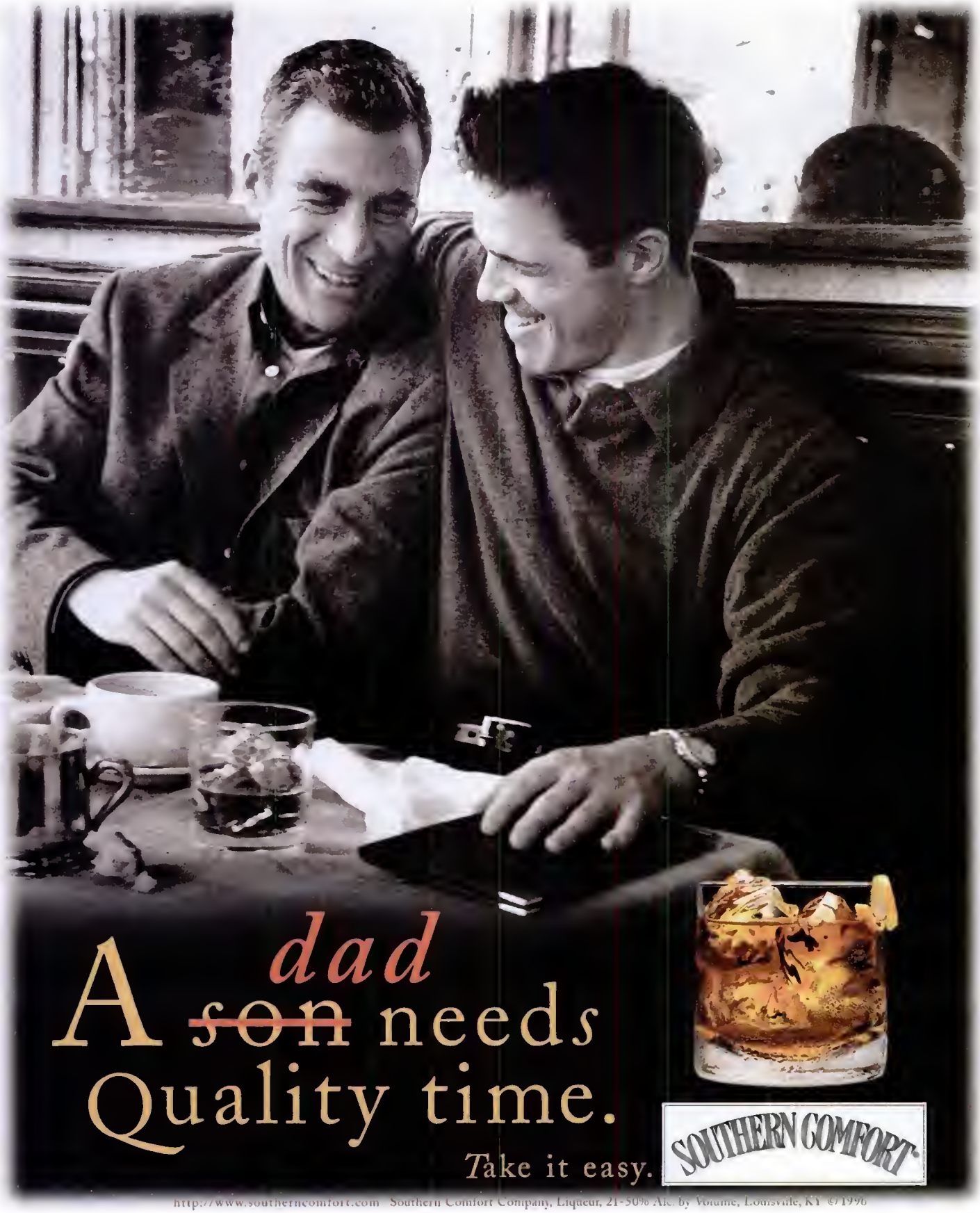
JULIA CHAPLIN

International

OPPOSITE *Left, shirt by Hugo by Hugo Boss; pants by Dolce & Gabbana. Right, boucle slip dress by Rebecca Danenberg.* **THIS PAGE** *Page shirt by Dolce & Gabbana; wool pants by Hugo by Hugo Boss; leather shoes by Dolce & Gabbana.* *Where to Buy, page 114.*

OPPOSITE *Second from left, printed silk shirt by Alpana Bawa; silk halter dress by Alpana Bawa.* THIS PAGE *Far right, organdy pieced striped shirt by Alpana Bawa; cotton-twill pants by Chalken and Capone.* *Where to Buy, page 114.*

Lamé bra and bikini by Deborah Marquit; mesh tulle top and pants by Cake. Where to Buy, page 114.



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Sequined bowler shirt by Smith & Jones; golfer-pants by Star 69; leather sandals by Hugo Boss. Satin tank by Hysteric Glamour; silk wrap skirt by Alpana Bawa; sandals by Screaming Mimi's. Where to Buy, page 114.

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GENERATIONS I

A PUNK LOOK AT HUMAN RIGHTS

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GENERATIONS I IS THE FIRST IN A SERIES OF FOUR CD'S THAT HONOR PAST AND PRESENT HUMAN RIGHTS LEADERS. THE FIRST PROJECT SALUTES ELEANOR ROOSEVELT AND HER EFFORTS IN CHAMPIONING THE UNITED NATIONS UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS. THE SERIES WILL RAISE FUNDS AND AWARENESS FOR THE HUMAN RIGHTS ACTION CENTER, WHICH WAS FOUNDED BY JACK HEALEY (THE FORMER DIRECTOR OF AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL).

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EXECUTIVE PROUCER: JASON ROTHBERG

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HOLIDAY IN CAMBODIA

Two decades after the horrors of the killing fields, Cambodia is torn between its brutal history and the cruel realities of contemporary capitalism. William T. Vollmann travels deep into the Southeast Asian jungle in search of Pol Pot, the legendary Communist leader and genocidal mastermind.

CHOEUNG EK KILLING FIELDS, NEAR PHNOM PENH (1991)

There were more than 8,000 skulls on glass shelves. I could see the rice fields behind them, a plain of light bright green, with palm and banana trees; the gray-green water was stubbled with rice.

They use poison, electric wire, steel bar, gun, the guardian said.

I saw a skull with a slit in it, a skull with a hole in it, a black skull, a brown skull, a gray skull, a yellow skull.

This one die steel bar. This one electric wire. This poison.

A sign said, INFANT KAMPUCHEAN: UNDER 15 YEARS OLD. Another sign said, SENILE FEMALE KAMPUCHEAN: OVER 60 YEARS OLD. The

A former torture chamber at Tuol Sleng, the nerve center of Khmer Rouge state terror in the late '70s. Opposite page: some of the more than 8,000 skulls of victims of the Pol Pot regime on display at Choeung Ek.

Strange fruit: A Khmer Rouge massacre site in 1981, two years after the Pol Pot regime was overthrown.

sweetish smell of the skulls was sickening.

Pest the skull stupa which rose high end white and yellow pegode-roofed lay the mass graves. Not ell hed been opened.

The Pol Pot people come here to kill, you understand? said the guerdien.

In the herd-pecked eerth eround the graves, bits of white end gray and blue cloth lay. A grave grinned before me. It was a gray, slimy sinkhole grown with weeds. A boy wes fishing there for frogs. All eround the grave lips were white objects. I bent down end picked one up; it was a human tooth.

TUOL SLENG GENOCIDE MUSEUM, PHNOM PENH (1991)

In another piece, in e dingy room of checkerboerd tiles, there was a bed with a chain fixed to it, e long screw in brackets. The room smelled like screams. On the wall was a photo of a body lying on the floor of this same room, legs beneath the outswung bar, end puddles of blood.

In the next room, again the frame of a bed, with the screwclemp, blood-steins black on the floor, on the wall a photo of e blackened body on the same bed, a chair upended beside it, echoing light of whiteness.

The name of this piece was Tuol Sleng. It was once a high school, until the Khmer Rouge came with a thousand soldiers and wove barbed wire around it and made their security regulations:

1. You must enswer according to my questions—don't turn them away.
6. While getting lashes of electrification you must not cry et ell.
8. Don't make pretexts in order to hide your jew of traitor.
9. If you don't follow the ebove rules, you shell get many many lashes of electric wire.

Another bedframe, segging, e rusty chain, shreds of cloth, the cartridge box that was the toilet (if you spilled it, you were required to clean the floor with your tongue), the clamp, the electric wire. Palm trees through the window.

Another. Another. On the wall, a photo of e bloated black body on the mattress, a sarong beside it, the rotten face screaming. A trowel-like club-bing tool lying on the bed. There was a fly crawling on it where something was clotted black.

The next room was filled with photos of people—meny of them mothers and children—fecing the camera, numbers pinned to them, wide-eyed, stering, some with ropes elreedy eround their necks. —The boy stered straight ahead, arms behind his back, behind him another prisoner bent over. —The man glared wildly. —The man stared out from a mass of people with upflung arms. —The boy stared straight ahead and blood bridled his mouth. —In the photos there were rows of skulls in the ditch like coconuts, skulls in platoons, dead bodies lying on these chessboard floors, with their numbers pinned to their dead chests.

Pol Pot's bust, smooth-cheeked end handsome, ceught light-gleems on nose and forehead like a stone Buddha. Pol Pot refused to answer, looked through everyone so distantly, stared level ecross the floor.

That was Building B. In Building C wes the cheir with the coller end screw-threads to slowly crush e prisoner's vertebrae. In thet femous K.R. phrase, the traitors had to be "smashed." Then ceme the torture-saws, barbed wire whips, canes, spades. Out of the 17,000 to 20,000 prisoners who passed through Tuol Sleng, eight are known to have survived. Some had left paintings: The men in green round caps were whipping e screaming woman, her baby taken from her arms by a man with a downturned mouth. A man was having his fingernails pulled out by Khmer Rouge who squatted to pour acid on his hends, blood on the floor, enother Khmer Rouge ready to whip him every time he screamed. Two Khmer Rouge, businesslike, were seering e women's nipples with red-hot pincers. (You heve to smash traitors by stages.) Then into the pit with ell of them, kneeling while e Khmer Rouge raised the club, enother in the mess grave to finish them off. Smash the children's heads on palm trees. Throw them up in the air; catch them on the points of beyonets.... A display of skulls white, yellow, gray, end brown.

A CAVEAT

Of course they blamed everything on the Reds, on the Khmer Rouge. Since I was American, they didn't want to hurt my feelings by reminding me that from 1969 to 1973 my country dropped 25 Hiroshimas' worth of bombs on Cambodia, killing 150,000 civilians or more. Some of those bombs did not detonate on impact, and went on killing, as they would surely do to the end of the century end beyond. We laid antipersonnel mines while we were at it. Our puppet, Lon Nol, did the same; he had insufficient men and materiel to stop the K.R., and mines at least kept them at bay. When the Reds in turn took power, they mined the borders. Nor did I want to embarrass my new friends by mentioning the mines which they themselves, the current Cembodian government forces, or Whites es they were celled, hed laid

ABOVE, KRAIPIT/SIPA; RIGHT, WILLIAM T. VOLLMANN.

against the Reds since the Vietnamese withdrawal in 1989, or the many, many mines which the Vietnamese had laid in Cambodia before then. By 1993 there were, at a very rough estimate, ten million mines in the country.

A CHEAT SHEET ON THE KHMER ROUGE

The Khmer Rouge is one of the most extreme political organizations of modern times. After World War II, when Cambodia's King Sihanouk successfully negotiated independence from France, he stifled many of the more radical voices on the Cambodian political scene. For those leftists who escaped, the result was further radicalization. A concretion of militant Maoist guerrillas began to form in the Cambodian jungle. The man who eventually became the Khmer Rouge leader was named Saloth Sar, but, like Stalin and Lenin, he operated under a pseudonym, Pol Pot ("politique potentiel").

During the Vietnam War, the Viet Cong began establishing "sanctuaries" inside Cambodia to escape from American bombs. This infuriated the U.S. government, and the CIA engineered a coup in Cambodia, replacing Sihanouk with General Lon Nol, who allowed the Americans to continue a secret bombing campaign inside Cambodia. The American bombing, combined with the regime's corruption and repression, drove vast numbers of peasants into Pol Pot's camp. In 1975, he took over the country.

His program was simple: No one will live in cities anymore. We will all grow rice. Only the tillers of the soil have the right to survive. Lon Nol's soldiers must be liquidated. People with education, or people with glasses, or people who speak a foreign language will all exist on probation.

So he emptied the cities. Hospital patients and other people who were insufficiently mobile were simply killed. Unrealistic agricultural planning slowly began to cause starvation, and outright murder accounted for other victims. By 1979, when the Vietnamese invaded Cambodia and overthrew Pol Pot, the Khmer Rouge had killed between 300,000 and three million people, depending on who you ask.

Pol Pot and his cadres fled into the jungle and became guerrillas again. They began to do business with Thailand and China, and eventually with corrupt royalist Cambodians. In the spring of 1996, Pol Pot was said to have died, but my Khmer Rouge contacts assure me that he is still alive.

KHLONG YAI, TRAT PROVINCE, THAILAND (1996)

One night five years later I sat reading about the latest Khmer Rouge attack on Poipet market; and my companion D. fanned herself wearily because it was very hot; and I looked up and slowly drank my warm beer, gazing into the canal between two piers, the canal like a mirror of mud in whose weary shimmers could be descried the reflections of the pilings of houses, pool halls, Chinese-charactered grocery-caves. In one window, someone's bra and dishtowels hung abnormally white like ghosts. The lady leaned out and smiled at us. D. asked her for news. She said that two days ago a man from town had gone into the mountains to cut wood and had been killed by a land mine. The next morning D. and I got a new driver, a pale yellow delicate boy with extensive chest tattoos like astronomical maps, and after the three of us had crowded into the cab of his truck and were on the road so that no one could listen, I asked if he knew any more details about the land-mine accident. He said that it was actually four Thais who'd died, but only one of them was from Khlong Yai; the other three were from Hat Lek, which was the driver's home town. They had been illegally cutting timber in Cambodia, which was a practice so extensive and until recently so lucrative that most people in Khlong Yai and in Hat Lek wore heavy gold chains. —Was this a Khmer Rouge land mine? I asked the driver. —Maybe K.R., maybe Cambodia government do and say it's K.R., he replied.

HOW MR. YU KON REALLY DIED

The name of the mine victim from Khlong Yai was Mr. Yu Kon. Later that day, D. and I went down to the wat, or Buddhist temple, and met his brother, who gave us red strands of yarn to wear in memory of him for the next 100 days. Mr. Yu Kon had been a rich and important man in the unlicensed timber business. Four of his woodsmen entered the Khmer Rouge area in Ban Lung and began to work. The K.R. immediately detained them, as was their normal procedure, and sent one man back with a demand to be paid 40,000 baht.

Yu Kon's brother said that the K.R. were always fair and businesslike. They only charged you once; the price was reasonable, and if you couldn't pay until you'd sold the wood, they were always willing to work something out. Such logging fees were, all in all, a very low part of overhead, which was itself quite low. The first time they met you, they put a gun to your head (usually a Kallshnikov, an "Ah Ka") and set a price. If you coughed up, they treated you right and never put a gun to your head again. The Reds set only one price. The Whites

Vanny looks at the meticulously numbered photos of victims in Tuol Sleng, where her own brother was tortured to death.

were always taking. No matter how much you gave them, they needed more.

The owner of one lumber yard in Khlong Yai told me that all the good wood near the border was long gone; one had to travel three days by boat now to get comparable timber, end that was awfully dangerous, so one paid end paid. Hence Mr. Yu Kon took the boat to Ban Lung in the company of a laborer whom the K.R. had sent out on bail, so to speak, and escending those clear-cut jungle mountains he met his Ah Ka–adorned business associates, who surely forebore to give him the barrel-to-the-forehead treatment, and he paid them the 40,000 in crisp thousand-baht notes and all was peachy. He and his three employees were walking away from that

There are believed to be ten million unexploded mines in Cambodia, planted by the Reds, the Whites, the Vietnamese, and the Americans.

successful parley when one of them, more enxious then careful, stepped on a land mine. A click, e terrifying detonation, and the three became hamburger. I assume that Mr. Yu Kon, in keeping with his higher status, was traveling at a slight distance from the others, for all that happened to him was the standard lesser evil: His lag was blown off. Heering the blast, the Reds came running, tied off the gushing stump with a tourniquet, made him as comfortable as they could, put up markers around him, and vanished. It took people six deys to find him. His brother estimated that he had died after two to three days, from pain end thirst. That was what tormented him the most, the brother said. He could not stop thinking about Yu Kon's long and lonely agony. He was not angry with the K.R. Lend mines were an occupational hazard. He was angry with the Whites, who charged him 33,000 baht to recover the bodies.

BORAI, TRAT PROVINCE, THAILAND

A month was gone, and because I still didn't know ebout Pol Pot's automatic death sentence for informers I still hoped to get permission to breeze into some K.R. camp or other in the jungle, just as I had elways been able to do before with other guerrilla groups. D. and I spent so many nights of sitting in cricket-crowded darkness, trying to talk with someone whose face was but e silhouette and whose language, rising and falling with what Westerners always rightly described as musical cadences, meant less to me than the sudden paleness of teeth smiling, or the moving darkness of a nod, or the shedow of fingers gesturing over a stone table.

By virtue of his position in Boral, our friend Wall Safe was able to guerantee the security of any K.R. member who cared to visit; as D. explained it to me, since he hed to pay so much money to the police, the police had to listen to him. So he kept trying to get them to come, but they wouldn't come. Well Safe said that three years ego it had been much easier. He showed off a .30 caliber Chinese Mauser pistol which the Khmer Rouge had given him. Usuelly they took more than they gave, he said with e laugh. He'd spent more then e year with them once, and they called him a friend, but every time he went into the jungle to see those friends, up would come the Ah Kas, pointing into his face, fingers on triggers, and then he'd have to give him his brand new M-16, his American Coit .45, or his Rollei camera, his Contax camera; now he took nothing but a cheap plastic point-and-shoot; sometimes he got so bored with replacing things, he said. Oh, but they were very nice, so nice when you got to know them; it was just their habit to strip you of your valuables; it was nothing personal.

Over the weeks I knew Wall Safe, he tried very hard to help me. He didn't want me to end up like his other *falang* (foreigner) journalist friend who, despairing of getting permission to meet the K.R., had finally rented a motorcycle and headed for the border, where the K.R. awarded him en Ah Ka burst to the face. In the end, Well Safe got me permission, but I didn't go because he estimated my chances of survival et 20 percent. He said that the K.R. had fragmented now, and the group that had accepted me might be ambushed by a group that didn't.

Why are they like that?

Too many guns. Everyone has a gun, so no respect for the big soldiers anymore. Stupid, eh? Pol Pot he must kill only the wise and keep the stupid for control.

PHNOM PENH (1996)

There were so many cers and motorcycles in Phnom Penh now that I sometimes had to weit up to e minute before jaywalking when end where I pleased. At every corner now there were gem shops and gold shops. Schoolgirls went home on motorcycles; showgirls came from home. It took me at leest five minutes of strolling to locate my first one-legged beggar, a former White soldier who doubtless was very fond of the K.R. The boy who sold me a fresh coconut full of juice beamed hopefully: Where you go? Killing field, genocide museum, national museum, national palace?

When I mentioned the skulls on the sheives to the pro-Red souls on the Thei side of the border, I'd usually discern e more aggressive cast to their eyes: They were rich people end I was delving into their not very decent business practices, which indignant self-interest roused them to protect. But in Cambodia I saw in the eyes of those I questioned the dull, pathetic anger which I knew so well. When I asked my dear friend Vanny what she would have me ask Pol Pot if I met him, I saw the pain flood into her face and hated myself. It was necessary to do this. It was needful to be absolutely sure, to ask and ask and double-check everything, because one does not want to meke any mistakes when one writes about Tuol Sleng. But I said to myself: I can't do this job much longer.

Do you have anything you want me to say to him? I repeated.

At first Vanny shook her head. Finally she said: Just I want to know why. Why he kill the people when he is Cambodian like them.

Vanny had been a little girl when the Khmer Rouge were in power. They'd liquidated many members of her family. She remembered seeing Cambodians beat Cambodians to death with sticks.

Not Vietnamese?

Cambodians did it. Red Khmer.

There was a silence, and then she seid: Now I tell my nephew, and he doesn't believe me.

(Time was Pol Pot's secret weapon, as it has been Hitler's—although the latter's victory is posthumous. Just let a new generation come, a generation which has not seen, and it will not, cannot believe. In this restaurant which I remembered very well from the yeers before it had been filled with air-

POL POT'S PROGRAM WAS SIMPLE: NO ONE LIVES IN CITIES. WE ALL GROW RICE.

LEFT: LES STONE/SYGMA; RIGHT: SYGMA.

conditioned luxury and gold fringes and businessmen from China and Singapore with their hand phones, it was hard for me to believe.)

Will you bring your nephew to see Tuol Sleng somedey? I esked.

I don't know.

Have you been to Tuol Slang?

One time.

How did you feel when you saw those things?

She lowered her head, and as I looked at her my eyes began to ooze useless tears.

I can hardly say how I was feeling, she whispered.

A SMILE IN TUOL SLENG

It wes pretty much the same as bafore in that hideous piece. I hadn't expected it to be different. The bloodstains on the floor had been scrubbed away or had crumblad away. In tha rooms with those evil bed frames, tha sama black-and-whita photographs were there, the photographs of tha dark, rotten, and withered bodies which the Vietnamese had found there efter the K.R. fled. Vanny said thet when she came there in 1982, tha bodias hed still been on the beds. They were buried outside now, under white markers.

We gazed togethar at a photograph of communal labor in tha rice fields, and she said: I remamber. I malaria...I do same lika that. Too hot, too hotl No medicine and no can rest. Only working and so hot.

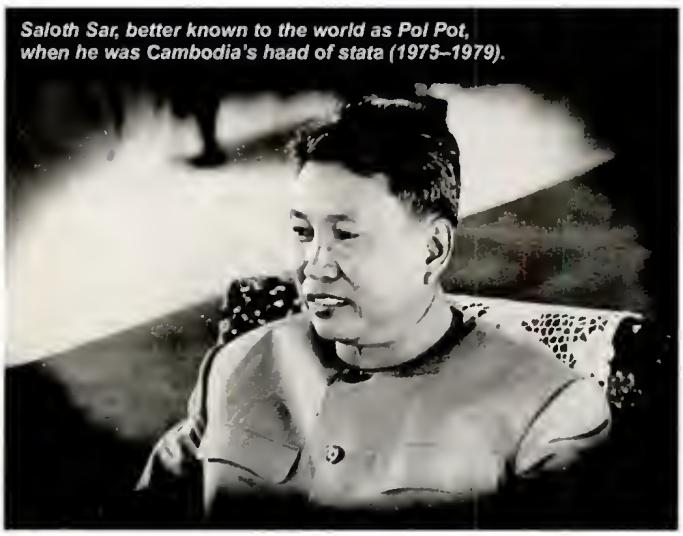
Wa looked at tha imeges of torture egein, end I esked her: Did you see things like this?

Yes, but I hide....

I asked if I could photograph her, and there in that place where they had tortured her brother to death sha faced the camera and politely smiled.

"AND THE ROOF OF MY HOUSE IS BROKEN"

In Phnom Panh I had another friand, a motorcycla drivar I had known for two yeers. At the end of the previous year, es he drove me to the eirport, I



Saloth Sar, better known to the world as Pol Pot, when he was Cambodia's haad of stata (1975–1979).

had confided to him that I was a journalist, and ha told me that he supported the Khmer Rouge. I asked him how well he knew that fine organization, and he told me that his sister was K.R. He'd gone to visit her once. She lived near Pailin, in a place long controlled by the insurgents. It had been a two-day ride on his motorcycle. He liked the K.R. very much, he said, bacausa thay were honest. His sister was happy and living well. She and her husband had two children. Most peopla in tha Red zona were bettar off than poor people in Phnom Penh, he said.

And is Pol Pot good or bad?

Bad, ha said. (I knew alreedy thet his fathar had starved to death in the Pol Pot time.)

And tha Khmer Rouge are the same as Pol Pot in their behavior, or different?

Different, he said.

I asked him to take me back to the killing fields at Choeung Ek.

Tha mass graves were almost filled in now. In another five years they'd be laval with tha ground. There'd been a flood, maybe many floods; the holes ware sandy and dirty, with saplings already growing in them, but bend down and you could still gather all the teeth or bone fragments or scraps of women's dresses you could possibly want; I didn't happen to want any. Tha heavy glass doors to tha shelves of skulls were warped now. I took my photographs, hating the job, hating being back here. Tha skulls did not small anymore, and I thought that they had darkened slightly. The motorcycle driver gazed into the mass graves and yawned. He had to bring tourists hare almost every week.

What do you think about the killing fields?

Terrible, he said sincerely.

Who do you think killed those peopla?

They say Khmer Rouge, but I believe only a littla. I don't know.

Whet does your sister think about the killing fialds?

She's far from here. So she don't care. Sha was refugee from Viatnam and came here to Phnom Penh, but no house, no land except for rich people.

But you have a house end land.

No lend, he returned with an angry smile. And the roof of my house is broken.

ARANYAPRATHET, SA KAEO PROVINCE, THAILAND

The merchants' dans, once just open-air flimflam stalls on a long zigzaggy lane of red dust and barbed wire, were becoming permanent; new blocks wera in construction. Here it all wes: phony sapphires, end occesionelly real onas from Pailin, secondhand shirts, uniforms, and jeans with the body odor still in them, California raisins, Vietnamese modal ships, and Chinase china. A filthy, bald little Cambodian urchin grabbed at my hand; I whirled him gently around my weist while his friend attempted to pick my pockat. Peopla told me that more and more Cambodian businassman ware establishing themselves over here; Poipet on the Khmer side was too dangerous. It was tha Thais who had tha money to buy, and they didn't like to go to Cambodia anymore. Soon D. end I sew the first one-legged little girl of tha day; than wa mat an 11-year-old boy whosa arm was sickaningly scarred from albow to wrist: accidant from mina, he said.

Our drivar didn't lika the Whitas much. Ha seid thara was shooting just across the border every day—you could hear it from Thailand—and some of it was Whita against Whita, but mostly it was Red against White. He said that we could go to the hospital in Aranyaprathet any time and see the victims.

Whet about all tha people missing one leg? Are those mines laid by the Reds or the Whites?

Mainly the Reds.

And you don't feel sad for tham?

Before, a littla bit sad, but see so many that now it become normal.

Ha took us to the hospital to inspect that day's crop. Cambodians could come thare for frea if they didn't have money. Nobody new in tha men's ward, but in the women's sida there lay a young brida whose face was still somewhat pretty; she'd been cutting grass with two othar girls, and one had stepped on a mina. Tha brida was tha only survivor. No iegs anymore. Har husband stood besida har bad, unmoving. I don't think the girl had realizad yat what hed happened to har. Maybe next year I'd see her on crutchas, swinging harself waarily down some muddy street. I hoped that she was claver with her hands.

"POL POT IS JUST ANOTHER WORD FOR KHMER ROUGE"

Hare ha came at last, a skinny dirty boy. Call him Mr. Rad, for ha was tha genuine article.

How many are there in your family? I asked him.

He's the number-one brother, D. intrepreted. Father die from sickness. Poor family. Mother selling vegetables at home.

How did he join?

He talk with someone he know. First time he becoma working with K.R., move heavy things for money. Not yet ten years old.

Did ha tell his mothar he'd become Khmer Rouge?

He don't tell.

If ha had told her, what would sha have thought?

Angry, end doesn't like.

Why?

Don't let him die. But very, very poor family. Must do. At ten years old he join. Go to fighting in Treng Province. Now he's 23. But maybe he little bit confused, Bill. From gun, aarthquake voice make trouble in his head, so

cannot remember some things.

How many people did you kill for the Khmer Rouge? I asked him directly.

He kill 15 Whites. He shooting, and the people he kill were 18, 19 years old. He only ten!

The first time he killed someone, what did he think?

The boy touched his heart. He spoke quickly and firmly. —He was so sad for them. Because Khmer together.

Then why did you kill them?

Because shooting together. If I don't kill them, they kill us.

In the Khmer Rouge did they ever talk to you about politics?

Nobody even teach me about shooting gun, but I learn myself.

So they didn't teach you any ideas at all?

Like a big general come to teach: We are Khmer Rouge now. If someone come to spy, don't let them still alive. Ever try to be good Khmer Rouge.

Have you ever heard the name Pol Pot?,

Pol Pot is just another word for Khmer Rouge. Maybe not a person. But if a person, Pol Pot always have a black uniform, and wear red fabric on head and wear shoes from rubber. But he never see.

And so once again, I thought, Pol Pot evaded understanding or judgment; even to his own followers he remained the faceless one, the great emptiness walking in rubber sandals. Charles de Gaulle once said that "authority requires prestige, and prestige requires remoteness." Here was remoteness with a vengeance.

A BOGEYMAN AND A BARBECUED DOG

The Thai police general said that last year the fighting between Reds and Whites had begun on the 20th of January. It was now Valentine's Day, and from here in Aranyaprathet down along the border to Trat, over a hundred Whites had died already, but only a few Reds. Every year they fought from January to June, and then they took a break until the fall. It was like *cha-cha-cha,* he said with a sunnily cynical grin. In the summer, he said, the Whites conquered Red territory, and in the winter it was the reverse. He said that two days ago in Battambang the Reds had been allowed to win, and they captured some equipment from the Whites. The next day the Whites won, capturing back their gear along with an equal array of Red weapons. They sold their booty to private bidders and split the profits with the Reds 50-50.

The police general admired the Red system a good deal. In the K.R. area, students went to school, the women did their thing at home, and the soldiers fought. That was how life should be. The Whites had no system, he said, no law. He showed me a color photograph he'd taken the day before yesterday of a bleeding man. The soldiers of two adjacent White checkpoints had opened up on each other in some commercial dispute. He showed me a photograph of a parched plain on which a skinny and desperate family of Cambodians were barbecuing a dead dog. They had nothing else to eat, they'd told him. On the White side, said the police general, one was either obscenely rich (and I recollected all those new restaurants in Phnom Penh) or else one starved. That was why he preferred the Khmer Rouge.

And Pol Pot, you like him? I asked.

Oh, he's a bogeyman. Parents use his name to frighten their children. If you just say his name, children will scream and run away. He's too strict, too cruel. I've never seen him, of course....

But he heads the K.R., and you like the K.R.

The police general finished his beer. —Soon the old man must die, he said. He and [K.R. General] Khieu Samphan and Prince Sihanouk—all the old generation. Then new people can come in to develop Cambodia.

Who would you say is stronger, the Reds or the Whites?

In this area, definitely the Reds.

Is there any other difference between the two?

Well, the Whites only care about money, money, money. The Reds follow the secret way.

CONCERNING FRIENDSHIP, AND THE INTERVAL OF URINATION

In a classic illustration of how one does indeed rise to one's proper level of incompetence, the White officer to whom the police general introduced me at the border the following day admitted that he didn't know so much these days, although he was in border intelligence, because he'd been promoted, so he just rode around in a car now; he never went data-collecting in the jungle anymore. His main task was to remind all his Thai counterparts to check all the IDs of Cambodians coming across the border. If they had

"Mr. Red," now 23, has been a Khmer Rouge fighter since he was ten. He says he has killed 15 Whites, but has never met Pol Pot.

identification, then they were White; they were O.K. If they had no papers, then they were certainly Red.

What do you do when you catch a Red? I asked.

Here on the Thai side I have no power, he said. I try to get the Thai police to help me bring them back to Cambodia.

And then?

And then I try to teach them, he said. I say: Do you want to change your mind or not? If they say yes, then it's O.K. I enroll them in the White army and give them one star or even two stars to make them happy. If they say no, I have to kill them right away, because they're so dangerous. I cannot even bring them to prison.

He was very uneasy now, and busy to boot; he had to rush off because a battle had just broken out ten kilometers away. I asked the Thai police general what he thought about his colleague. —Before, he said, a Cambodian was your friend all day, and only changed his mind in the nighttime. Then they all started getting greedier, and a Cambodian was your friend for about an hour. Now a Cambodian is your friend for about as long as it takes him to piss.

INTRODUCING MR. GOLD

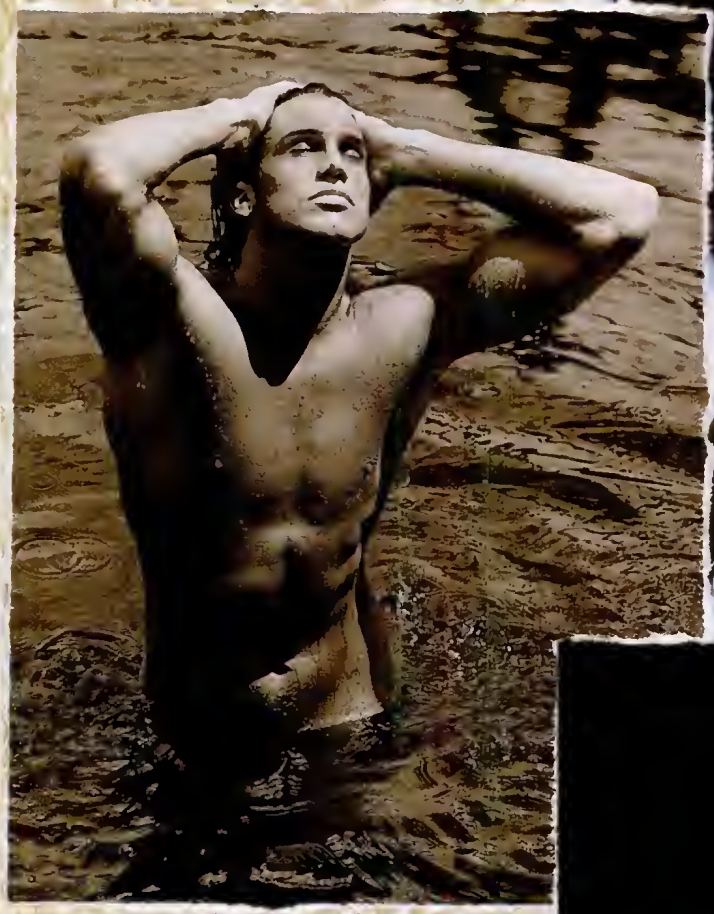
The driver had a friend named Mr. Gold—well, let me put this another way, for I am not sure that Mr. Gold had any friends. He was Khmer and had done a lot of work for Japanese journalists. One of D.'s friends had used him and said that he always got the goods, but finally dropped him because Mr. Gold was too greedy, too expensive. His was a dark, tight, blank, unfriendly face, half-concealed by dark glasses. It never smiled. It looked upon the world with indifference. When some device of avarice was conceived beneath the forehead's skin, then whispers might come out of the mouth; the face might readily bend, in order to mouth greedy and sinister breathings in D.'s ear, but the face itself expressed nothing, was nothing, had looked, I am sure, upon nothingness.

Mr. Gold preferred the Red side, he said, because if you went to the Reds you could keep your power, but if you went to the Whites you must give everything up—like cutting off an arm and a leg, he said.

We bought Mr. Gold expensive dinners every night and set him to work. His illicit excursions to the jungle on our behalf paid off, for despite Pol Pot's rather stern prohibition (any K.R. who was caught with a journalist got executed), he had found a Khmer Rouge "big general" who was willing to sing. This was no small accomplishment on his part. Nobody who was not a businessman met the K.R. anymore, it seemed. The Japanese journalists

WILLIAM T. VOLLMANN

IN THE RAW



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were always trying. They threw their money around and generally managed to cross the mine fields by one secret way or another until they got to Battambang. The Khmer Rouge finished a number of them off there. The police general had told me one story of a Japanese with a video camera worth one million baht. The Khmer Rouge shot him in the face and sold the camera for 100,000, which means that the only one who got any kind of story out of it was me, and it's not even a very interesting story, only sad and disgusting like all the other stories about this particular war.

AN INTERVIEW WITH GENERAL X

He frowned, folded his arms, and glowered, refusing to answer when I asked how he was. He crossed his ankles, put his head back against the wall, and gazed at the ceiling.

He spread his fingers like wings and folded them in against his breast. His

black eyes sparkled strangely.

He said if we take picture of him, member see and must kill, said D.

When did you join the Khmer Rouge?

1975.

How old are you now?

Thirty-six.

So he was my age.

He never looked at me except in side-flashes, and then quickly gazed away at the hall. I knew this much: Without the money he would never have come. How much was he actually getting? Mr. Gold, who sat blandly translating from Khmer to Thai in his melodious voice, had required 15,000 baht for this hour (although yesterday he'd told us 10,000). He'd said that the Thai soldiers required 5,000, and this general ten. But when it came time to pay Mr. Gold at the end of the interview, he drove the general away first. He did not want him to see that fat envelope which D. placed into his hands. My assumption is that Mr. Gold took at least half the money for himself, then told the general and the Thai soldiers that the stingy, no-good *falang* journalist had underpaid.

The Khmer Rouge general glared at the ceiling. He wore dark clothing, one item of which was a brand new navy denim jacket with shiny buttons. My sense of symbolism was pleased to see that beneath the jacket he had on a red shirt. He was very slender and stern and resolute.

Why did you join the Khmer Rouge?

Because at that time Khmer Rouge can come winner from Lon Nol already.

This was a clear answer, a reasonable answer, a fair answer. This Khmer Rouge was a careerist, not an ideologue, as one would have expected from his date of joining. But it made me sad, because that was how they all were. I longed to meet somebody like Hermann Göring, who at the Nuremberg trials argued with the prosecutor point by point, unashamed to be a Nazi. This general was not going to be Göring. He was going to be another I-was-only-following-orders type.

When you joined, did you become a Communist?

Yes.

What does Communism mean to you?

Just fighting for something he want to do, fighting for some aim until success. For his feeling, everyone in the world want to get good things, but for

LEFT, JASON BLEITREU/SYGMA; RIGHT, SYGMA.

Above: Khmer Rouge fighters who recently emerged from the jungle in a negotiated surrender. Opposite: Whites, or troops of the royalist Cambodian government.

the small soldier, just doing, like you give me go to market, and I do, but I don't know what is the aim.

When he said that, I felt a little sorry for him. Unlike Göring, he was not on trial for his life here. He could have blustered; he could have boasted; he could have said that he was proud of who and what he was. But even though he was a high-ranking general, he spoke like a "small soldier." A moment later, I felt even more sorry for him, because there came a hailstorm of knocking on the door and he almost fainted. It was only the maid, come to return our laundry. This general was truly in peril of his life, not from me, but from almost everyone else in Thailand.

Do you know who Karl Marx is? I asked.

He know about Marx-Lenin. He know their system.

Can you describe that system?

He don't know too much, but he know. Marx-Lenin system is very strong and strict. If they tell you do, then you must do, dead or alive. About the rule of Karl Marx they always make the tough rule. If they want you to go you have to go; if they tell you to stop you have to stop, tell you to turn right you have to turn right; you can't say no. If you say no they going to punish you.

And Mao, do you know about him?

China, said the general with a happy smile.

Has he ever read the works of Mao?

Never. He never have time for reading. For his own idea, never agree with Communism, he added unexpectedly.

Did you have a happy life in the Pol Pot time?

No, unhappy.

Why?

They made us adapt ourselves. The soldier need to take care for the border and the women and the child work in the farm to develop country, like a big group. In the Communist system, must work in team.

And what was your job?

First time, he work like a citizen, work in a farm. After that he work in army camp.

When did you first see a killed person, in the Lon Nol time or the Pol Pot time?

Pol Pot time.

When was that?

1975, after Lon Nol finish.

What happened?

After finish fighting, and then have some order, if you are big general of Lon Nol, you must bring uniform to meet Sihanouk, and after that, generals all get on truck, and they kill them.

Did you kill them?

No.

Who did it?

He didn't know who. Just see dead people.

How many?

About three or four hundred persons.

How were they killed?

continued on page 114

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by Mike Goudreau

Animal rights supporters took to the streets during June's World Awareness Week in Washington, D.C.

T.L. LITT/IMPACT VISUALS

Blood Feud

Will killing animals save human lives? Two passionate activist groups clash over the ethics of AIDS research.

THE OPEN HATRED between AIDS activists and animal-rights advocates is, by now, easily sound-bited. ACT UP's Steve Michael: "How dare they equate our struggle for a cure with theirs over the rights of rats?" PETA's Dan Mathews: "Building careers on the lives of animals while waving the AIDS flag makes me *sick*."

Deep resentment has been brewing between the two camps for years over the issue of animal experimentation in AIDS research. Still, the two camps had somehow managed to stay out of each other's way. But when San Francisco AIDS activist Jeff Getty gained national attention by allowing researchers to transplant into his body a baboon's bone marrow, PETA bristled. Even though the FDA had not requested that the animal be sacrificed for the experiment, Getty's doctors rationalized that if the beboon was killed end frozen, it could be tested in the event Getty became ill with en unfamiliar disease. PETA viewed the high-profile killing of the animal as a call to arms, and came out swinging against the entire field of animal experimentation in AIDS research. ACT UP—or at least several major chapters—went on the counteroffensive.

Getty's experiment failed—the graft had no impact on his immune system—but it served as the catalyst for what is now becoming a mission for Getty and other AIDS activists: to demolish the credibility of animal-rights activists. Battle lines are now drawn between the two titans of grassroots activism: ACT UP (AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power), militant in its quest for en AIDS cure, and PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animels), which believes that torturing and killing animals for human gain—any human gain—is immoral and unethical. Both sides are passionate, media-savvy, end tenacious. Both sides are committed to the saving of lives; each side accuses the other of cold-blooded murder.

The beginnings of the feud can be traced to April 1989, when the activist group Animal Liberation Front made a pre-dawn break into animal-research facilities on the University of Arizona campus. The ALF set free some 1,200 lab rats, frogs, rabbits, and guinea pigs; torched two buildings; and scrawled such messages as ANIMAL RESEARCH IS SCIENTIFIC FRAUD! on the walls. Some of the research demolished by the activists was aimed at cryptosporidium—a diarrhea-causing parasite, sometimes found in drinking water, that can be deadly to people with AIDS.

Several months earlier, Seattle's moderate animal-rights group Progressive Animal Welfare Society (PAWS) mounted a public campaign attacking the validity and humanity of the work of Dr. Hans Ochs of the University of Washington. Ochs was seeking a $2 million grant from the National Institutes of Health; he wanted to inject 30 pregnant macaque monkeys with an HIV-like virus in order to study its transmission to offspring. Ochs's proposal hed been rejected by the NIH before, and once again, he did not get the grant—a decision some attributed to the animal-rights pressure. AIDS ectivists contend that these end other interferences have blocked vital research on AIDS.

The baseline belief among pro–animal research activists is that humans are superior to, and therefore more important than, animals. Most people, deep down, probably agree with that. But ACT UP has brought a new zeel, stripped of any anguish or embiguity, to an ancient question. It's not, "How dare you do this to people?" but, "How dare you do this to *people with AIDS*?

ACT UP has joined forces with the biomedical industry in its battle egainst PETA. Americans for Medical Progress, for example, which has helped to plan and finance many of ACT UP's and particularly Getty's strategic protests, was founded by U.S. Surgical Corp; that company came under fire severel yeers ego when animel-rights activists learned its salespeople were killing thousands of live dogs to market products such as their surgical staples. Joining in ACT UP's all-out publicity war, AMP has run full-page newspaper ads denouncing PETA, urging Hollywood celebrities to shed their allegiance. MEDICAL PROGRESS OR PETA? reads the ad. IT'S YOUR CHOICE. AMP's Susan Paris seys she views animal-rights activism as "a huge, dangerous movement." "With their campaigns end lies end rhetoric, I see similarities between them and the rise of Hitler," she says. "They're infiltrating everywhere."

Hostilities heve escalated to the point of shouting matches and fist fights on several occasions. Getty end AMP blocked traffic and held press conferences to lash out at PETA during June's World Animal Awareness Week. When CNN's cameras caught two animal-rights activists being dragged out of an AMP press conference, "AIDS research vs. animal rights" officially had a image attached to it: The two groups thet had so meny times used such tactics against the evil establishment were now using them against each other. The clash has caused dissention within ACT UP—at least two chapters heve sided with PETA—and hes left celebrities caught in a tug-of-war between two causes they passionately support and are now forced to choose between.

"These people gave up their fur coats for this

issue," said Peter Cashmen of ACT UP Los Angeles, eyeing a stretch limousine making its wey to PETA's celebrity-studded Animels Ball and Humanitarian Awards gala in Hollywood last December. "But they're asking us to give up our lives." Outside the glitzy hell, the picketers shouting end beering signs reeding PETA LIES end TREAT PEOPLE ETHICALLY Tool included members of ACT UP L.A. and AMP as well as various representatives of the biomedicel and vivisection industry. AMP also accompanied ACT UP Golden Gete to Weshington, D.C., lest June to protest the enimel-rights convention. "We mede e pretty good dent," says AMP's Paris, "because a lot of people did not want to cross en AIDS picket line to support animal rights."

AMP's position, as proclelmed in a press release, is that the enimel-rights agenda is the "greatest immediete threet to the lives of people with HIV and AIDS." But PETA counters thet enimel research is not just inhumane but also wasteful end scientifically invelid: As enimal-experimentation reseercher Dr. Tony Page points out, animal physiology is different enough from humen thet test results can be meaningless, or worse. Thelidomine, for example, is all but harmless to rats but causes neurological damage and severe birth defects in humans. Rabbits can survive neerly 30 times the amount of strychnine that would kill e person. In Britain, a heart-diseese drug thet had pessed safely through animal tests epperently killed several humen petients. And even enimel-testing supporters egree that there is no useble animal model for HIV end AIDS: The attempt to

An ACT UP member argues for animal testing.

meke animals sick with HIV has been a near-total failure. "Once people recognize the flawed science of enimel testing," says PETA's Mathews, "they become much more open to the ethical ergument."

Mainstream research does seem to be backing eway from animal testing, because of high costs end the increesing computerization of medicine es well es negative publicity. On the other hand, enimel reseerch is still big business; the NIH earmarked $34 million for "enimal models and releted studies" lest yeer. Thet emount doesn't necessarily include research on AIDS drugs, which the FDA requires to be tested for toxicity in enimels before approvel. Most of the AIDS research community still believes thet animel testing is necessery, thet it cannot yet be replaced—as animal-rights activists contend—by human clinical, epidemiological, and in vitro (test tube) studies end by computer models.

"If you went to study e complex diseese process, you have to study it in a living organism of some kind," says Dr. Jack Killen, director of the Division of AIDS at the NIH. "Animal models are models—they don't provide the answer. But they are models, they give you leads. Otherwise, you are shooting blind."

"All of the great drugs in the system right now benefited from animal research," edds Mike Shriver, director of public policy for the National Association of People with AIDS. "All of them."

Mathews, though, sees no reeson to be thenkful for those "great drugs," none of which has been proven to extend life. "The industry is draining the pockets of people with AIDS and giving them drugs thet make them sick," he says. "AIDS will be the one medical issue that breaks the beck of the enimal-research industry."

Like the ebortion bettle, the debete is gridlocked over a question that can perhaps never be resolved: What velue should we place on different forms of life? PETA's mein spokesperson on this issue, Steve Simmons, has weighed the question carefully: He has full-blown AIDS. A few months before he was hospitalized in critical condition, he said, "Living with AIDS has only strengthened my conviction that torturing animels has nothing to do with curing the disease." ●

T.L. LITT/IMPACT VISUALS

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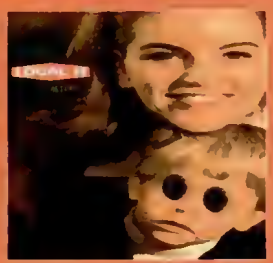

ISLAND
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by David Kushner

Eye Spy

WHILE THE INTERNET is the backbone of the Global Village, Web Cams, live-video portholes to life offline, are the eyes. The concept that started in 1991 with a lone lens aimed at a coffee pot in the University of Cambridge computer lab is as simple as it is mundane: Hook up a video camera to a computer, point it at something like an Arizona nightclub's mosh pit (http://hotcong.com/congo/club/cam.html) or a rotting chunk of Spam (http://www.fright.com/cgi-bin/spamcam), then beam onto a Web page—preferably all day, every day.

Andy Warhol would appreciate the pop voyeurism of street-corner Cams like the one on the notorious Hollywood and Vine intersection (http://hollywood.bhi.hollywood.ca.us:8000/pictures/image01.gif) or the infamous ThingTV, which once leered down on New York City's lascivious 11th Avenue and 28th Street juncture. These inconspicuous surveillance cameras are great for eavesdropping on an old neighborhood or inventing quotidian dramas about random street vagrants. More inane are the Cams exhibitionists turn on themselves; after spending a few minutes peeping into the pallid den of some Dutch guy named Petra (http://www.widexs.com/cam/), The Real World doesn't seem half bad. For lurkers who want more hands-on voyeurism, the Interactive Model Railroad (http://rr-vs.informatik.uni-ulm.de/rr/) includes directional icons to make a set of model trains run and, for the lucky, crash (some of the better collisions are available as video downloads). And if watching grass grow sounds more exciting than these sites, don't worry: There's a Web Cam at Ars Electronica Center's Tele-Garden (http://telegarden.aec.at\cgi-bin\gard-image\G) filming a nice hunk of sod just for you.

ILLUSTRATION, ADAM WARREN/JOE ROSAS.

Medium Elite

For the past year, major labels have been hyping enhanced CDs, audio/multimedia hybrids that, in reality, are little more than digitized press kits. Enter OM Records, a San Francisco–based indie outfit whose latest releases are making good on the format's promise. *Mushroom Jazz*, an acid-bop collection by DJ Mark Farina, features a desktop mixing-station that lets listeners remix the album's tracks, while *Soul Motion* gives some cultural context to a '70s-style soul compilation with vintage trailers from the blaxploitation classics *Shaft* and *Superfly*. And unlike the offerings from the majors, OM's two-disc sets (one audio, one CD-ROM) cost only a buck more than a regular CD.

Data Surf

Too burned out to go scavenging for your info fix online? NewsCatcher ($150), a wireless, Windows 95 desktop receiver, can do the dirty work for you. This Rubik's Cube–size pyramid sits on top of a computer monitor and fetches everything from breaking stories to film reviews via AirMedia Live, an Internet broadcast service with sources like Reuters and SportsLine. All the headlines are arranged under a concise icon bar, so getting a host of links on the latest hoops scores is as easy as clicking the basketball button. And since it doesn't eat up a phone line, NewsCatcher works in the background while you play network Marathon or just loaf around offline.

Head Games

Anyone who ever believed in Ouija boards will want to try out MindDrive ($130), the first CD-ROM gaming system controlled by thought alone. Instead of wiggling a joystick, players slip on a finger pad (built in sensors pick up the "bio-electric signals" that send commands to your body parts) and simply think in the direction they want the MindSkier or MindBowling ball to go. It sounds like something out of a David Copperfield special, but with a clear head and some serious patience, these games actually work.

Above, the MindDrive sensor. Right, the Pinball Mind Game.

green
with envy.
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SPINS

PLATTER DU JOUR

8 PAVEMENT
Brighten the Corners
Matador/Capitol

THE PREEMINENT INDIE-ROCK band of the '90s, Pavemant have always been the boys with the most cake. At once artily dissonant and undeniably anthemic, elliptical and scathingly purist, they'va gotten to have their cool and eat it too. Up through the alt-rock semi-hit "Cut Your Hair," nothing stuck to Pavement: Thair every monater riff came with e self-conacious critique ("monster riff"—huh huh huh), while Stephen Malkmus's lyrics accommodated muitiple, often opposing readings. The band even eluded capture for Malkmus's infamous anti–Smashing Pumpkins rant on *Crooked Rain, Crooked Rain*—the sentiments expressed, explained the ainger, ware meent to be those of en aging California country rocker.

On Pavement's 1995 album *Wowee Zowee*, tha control jocks alipped up a bit. They started falling for the rapture—rock catharsia, fucking, empathy—and forgetting to poke smert-ass holes in it. Pevement revealed a deeper sensuality, a new vulnerabillity, which some longtime fana called "overdrematic." This haretic critic would trade all the pre–*Wowee Zowee* output for the first verse and chorua of "Rattled by the Rush" simply because indie rock's Grace Kelly felt himself morphing into Ingrid Bergman for a moment; and that motion was fucked up, sexy, and tons more thrilling than whether Northern Califernie should seceda from the state.

And now comes *Brighten the Corners*, which, musically at least, steps off the cliff into bliss ocean. All midtampo swaet-and-sour crunch, tha album earns its name by sweeping out *Wowee Zowee*'a protective filter and apotlighting the Pevement collection of sharp, shiny hooks with a higher-watt bulb. Racordad with Mitch "*Murmur*" Easter at his home studio, these tunea want you end they're not shy about it. Thay catch you up, charm, rouse, and freak you, and don't often ridicule (exception: tha turgid rave-up rock jest "We Are Underused"). All with more wit end definition than Pavement showed on *Slanted and Enchanted*, and leas of tha cagineas of *Crooked Rain, Crooked Rain* and *Wowee Zowee*.

But at the same time, Malkmus has pulled down a veil of brittle vocal mannerisma and proae, a careful diatance all the more startling for how much anarl and purr he proffered on *Wowee Zowee*. Perhepa precisely because the music haa opened itself so wide, wordy rappinghood haa got hia iust in check, if not his babble. He only admits to coveting privacy (the delightfully woozy "Shady Lana"), noncommittal flux ("Starlings of tha Slipstream"), and the right to be alianated about his power to create even as he exploits the privilege ("Stereo"). "I waltz ecross the wilderneas," he cleima deriaively in the nightmare carnival ride "Transport Is Arranged," "With nothing but a compass and a canteen [and gnarly guitar whine] / Setting the scenes."

If anything escapes Malkmus's deliberate performance here, it's his discomfort with the *physical* power to originate. Any indie apostate who suspected thet *Wowee Zowee*'a "Fight This Generation" had more to with sperm-meets-egg than with X will find much ammunition throughout *Brighten the Corners*: "Man is breeding forever," keena Malkmus in "Fin." The uneesinesa reaches its apex in the delicetely poised saxuel ataaia of "Type Slowly": "The edge of creation is blurred and bluahed," croona Malkmua, befora yelping out in a panicky Palaca style: "Not a lot of room to grow insida this leather terrarium."

I see these comical complaints as part of Malkmus's effort to offsat tha muaic's generative, boundary-crossing ruah, to keep his self from diaappeering into it. Yet why does he use the womb and women to atand for what he's trying to fend off? In "Transport Is Arranged," the singer follows up a line about hating all he touchas with the vastly condescending assurance "I know you're my lady, but...." (Stereo)type more alowly, please.

Malkmus-the-lyricist's prevarications seem doubly unfortunata givan tha inaistence of his aongs. *Brighten the Corners* ia e guiter-rock album invigorated by hip-hop, in the same way *Marquee Moon* waa e guiter-rock album invigorated by reggae. "it's in / How you inflect," pulses Malkmus on "Blue Hawaiian," a song whose shape is bent as much by De Le Soul'a "Buddy" groova as by Neil Young's edge-walking solos.

You might dub *Brighten the Corners* a "classic rock" elbum, because, from its hungry musical fualon to its dicey sexual politica, that's exactly what it is. If it providas a blueprint and aome sardonic commentary ("Hey, listen to mei I'm on atereol"), well, so do commercials these days. In the elbum's melancholy coda, Melkmus warblea, "I truat you will tell me if I em making a fool of myaelf." He la, of course, end ao ia Pevement; but when I'm caught up, aay, in the bitchy rap and curled-coil riff of "Embaaay Row," it's difficult to care. Like men, rock is breeding forever. Oh yeah.

TERRI SUTTON

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YO! RAP MUSIC FOR ALTERNAGEEKS

News Flash! In a press conference in Oakland, rapper Dru Down announced he was the illegitimate son of Bootsy Collins, sending the music world into a tizzy. A tearful Dru and Bootsy met the media, telling a lurid tale of seduction, desertion, and reunification. Vowing to work together, Dru and Bootsy world-premiered their duet single , a rapturous combination of rap and funk that is sure to set the clubs ablaze this chilly winter. Dru Down is Oakland's Mack Of The Year, and if you want to know how to roll like a pimp check out .

Frankie Cutlass – If there is such a thing as a greatest hits of New York Hip Hop coming out this year, it's the new album from Frankie Cutlass, one of NY's most celebrated DJ's, and it features guest performances by Mobb Deep, Busta Rhymes, Fat Joe, Heltah Skeltah, Biz Markie and 2 special platinum rappers whose names we can't mention here. If you are into hip hop music, you'll love this album. The Source Magazine writes, "With a platoon-sized roster full of top choice talent, this latest from a 'real live Boriqua' nigga like Cutlass should expand his fan base beyond the NY metro and re-establish Latinos...as true members of the Hip-Hop Nation".

Tela – Southern funk at its finest from the hottest label in the south, Suave Records. If you're into playa music this is the record for you, featuring label mates Crime Boss, Mr. Mike and 8 Ball. The first single and video, , is blowing up across the country. A hymn to strip clubs everywhere featuring verses like:
What time the club close at three?
What's up. You coming with me?
We can smoke up mad trees,
after you get up off your knees
You want some cheese, hoe please,
tricks don't stay at the Suave House
Hoes around my nuts like gnats,
real dogs don't play with cats
That's for real baby, recognize and show me love
Dig that shit, Sho Nuff.

And now the best for last, it's all Mo Thugs. Bone, along with Relativity, are proud to announce the launch of their new label, Mo thugs Records. Their first LP, , featuring Layzie Bone, Krayzie Bone, and Flesh-N-Bone, just went platinum. The new single is from Tré, featuring Krayzie Bone. If you like R&B, this is the record for you. These are the girls from the video, and we think they're going to be big stars.

Also look out for:
DJ Honda – A japanese DJ whose album is banging hip hop heads everywhere, featuring a who's who of east coast artists. M.O.P. – A new single. . dropping now. PMD – Get ready for the new single with Mobb Deep, entitled .

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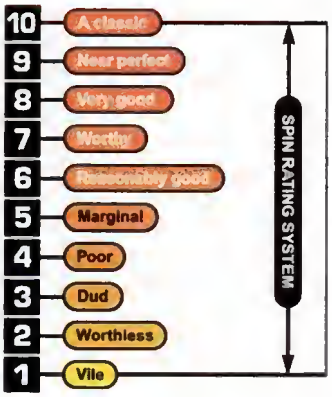


8 FREEDY JOHNSTON

Never Home
Elektra

In 1992, defying the taste for tortured chaos the triumph of *Nevermind* signified, Freedy Johnston releesed the best album he'll ever make in his life. Contained, mature, realistic in philosophy and aesthetic, its every goddamned song a keeper, *Can You Fly* was a flat-out monument of singer/songwriterdom—up there with Rendy Newman's *12 Songs*, Joni Mitchell's *For the Roses*, and other such prepunk artifacts. The Kansas-born, Hoboken, New Jersey fixture is modest in everything but his perfectionism, his rage repressed if that and his confusion a puzzlement so permenent it comes as naturally as breathing. His epiphanies evoke a heartland miniaturist like Bobbie Ann Meson more than any rock artiste. And though he's all for fest end loud—he's been known to front e punky Emberrassment tribute band—his '70s-style studio rock definitely won't scare Metallice into changing their hairdos again.

Can You Fly got him e major-label deal, naturally, end elmost es naturally, 1994's *This Perfect World* sounded a little stiff, too conscious of its commercial destiny. So I'm relieved to report that on *Never Home*, Johnston's matched gifts for the memorable tune, the telling phrase, and the painful situation all reessert themselves. New producer Danny Kortchmar, who goes back to Cerole King end James Taylor, is en impeccably catchy studio guitarist bettersuited to Johnston's sensibility than *This Perfect World*'s Butch Vig. Not every song is a keeper, but more then half are, and nothing goes by without waving hello.

Always partial to the representational, Johnston hes gotten more literal as he's mastered his craft—"On the Wey Out" is really about a shoplifter, "Western Sky" really about a pilot's son who won't take the plane because his ded died in one. Significantly, though, "Western Sky" is also about a warm, strong marriage, since like ell his colleagues Johnston keeps returning to the theme of troubled love. Give him credit for making sure that not every relationship he writes about is merely doomed. On "He Wasn't Murdered," a guy who walks out ends up calling home; in "Seventies Girl," e guy who's henging in there is determined to quench thet old fleme; in "Gone to See the Fire," a gal hesn't left the pyromeniec yet, eithough she probably will (end should). And "If It's True" is e heartbreaker. The story of a pregnancy scare that could go any which way, it's jam-packed with enough emotion and uncertainty to convince eny reasonable tortured teen that singer/songwriters heve their place after all. ROBERT CHRISTGAU

7 VERUCA SALT

Eight Arms to Hold You
DGC

I bet Nina Gordon gets called "Hon" a lot by weitresses. She hes that kind of voice; the kind that has to squeeze big words through a pint-sized throat hole; the kind that mekes you write a song about your inner "Seether" even though you sound so cute when you're mad; the kind thet's un-tough enough so you compensate by hiring gruff guru Steve Albini to engineer your unladylike EP *Blow It Out Your Ass It's Veruca Salt*. Despite ell her rage, she's still just e brat up on stage.

Well, rock'n'roll still needs ell the girlie brats it can get if you ask me. Veruca's likable debut, *American Thighs*, seemed fresh because of the way Chicago frontwomen Gordon and Louise Post's snotty-sweet anecdotes about when your "nightgown is in knots" played against grungey guitar riffs. Their shifting voices, as they took turns singing lead, had the added effect of feeling like they were talking (and listening) to each other.

Nearly three years later, they're still chatting. Their themes, which

can be boiled down to "I'm lonely" and "You're wrong," haven't changed much on the new *Eight Arms to Hold You*. What has changed is the intensity of their arrangements, cranked up thanks to Metallica end Def Leppard producer Bob Rock. Veruca Salt want to sound bad to the bone.

Not that they've ditched delicacy completely. Post's romantic heart provides a contrast for Gordon's smart mouth; in her ballad "Loneliness Is Worse," Post pines "Don't you want to be happy with me" at her dearly

departed. Meanwhile, Gordon knocks off lines to her lovers like "Now you're gone and I don't think I care."

The only man she really falls for here is a certain British pop star. "With David Bowie" implies she receives subliminal messages in his songs: "You want me to sing / I can! / I can!" Bowie probably couldn't give a white wig, but it's enough for Gordon to *believe* someone wants to hear what she has to say. And you've got to hope, now that Veruca Salt have invaded the dingy men's room called power pop as successfully as any other female-led band, that someone's going to listen. **SARAH VOWELL**

4 MOBY
Animal Rights
Elektra

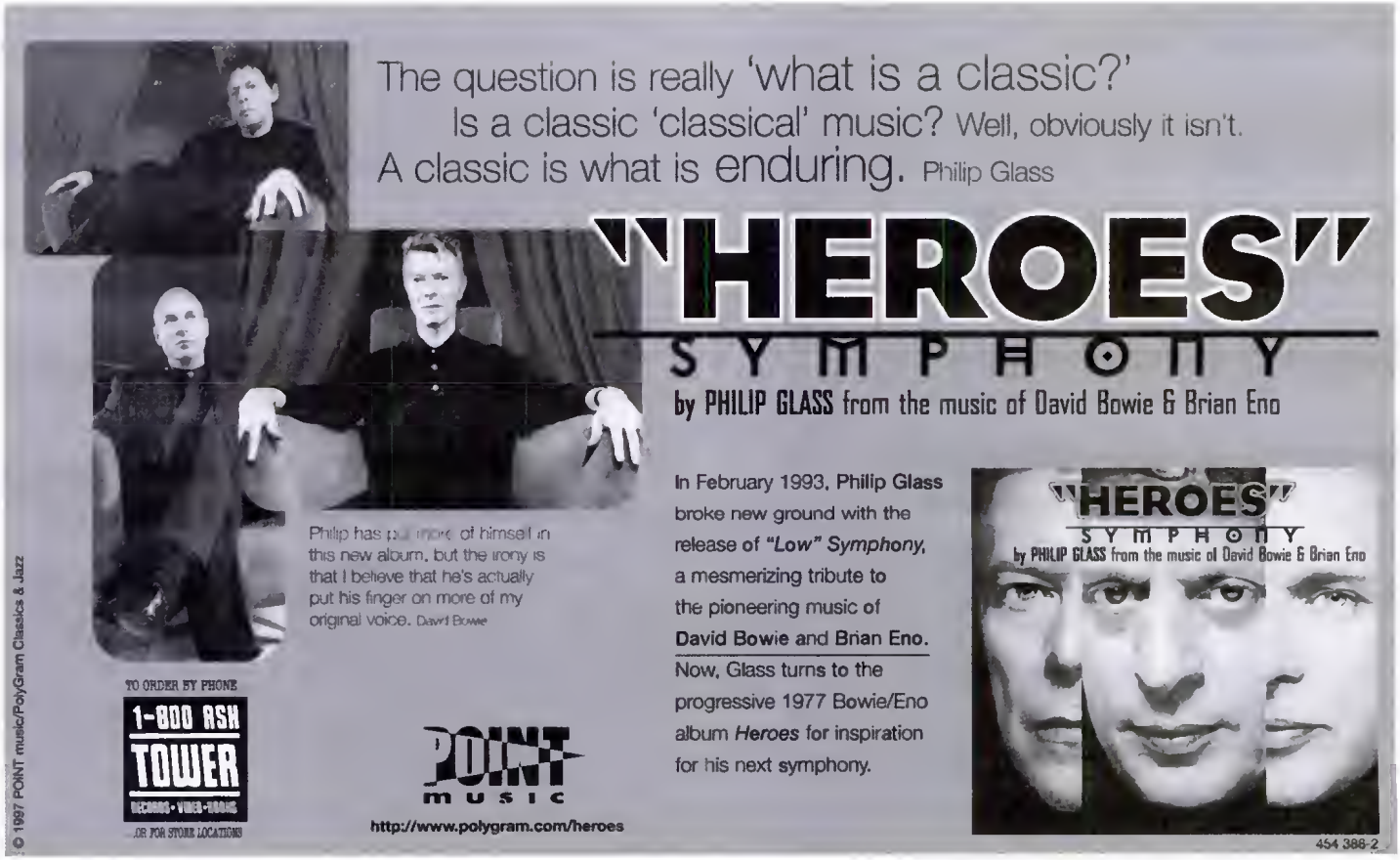
Six songs into this follow-up to last year's *Everything Is Wrong*, Moby burns rubber. "Come on Baby," it's called, and it's all anyone could esk for: a sensational, boogie-fed sex-rant that begs "Let me feel my gift to God grow." The giant hook that spins out of the song has a slippery charisme, recherging rhythms that get jungle intricacy and rock euthority exactly right. A couple of time-filling quasi instrumentals later, Moby does it again with "Say It's All Mine," the second and final reason to hear this album. After building atmospherically though verses that wonder "Did you ever slip into my ozone?" and on to one of those glam-ugly choruses perfected by the Cult and made solemnly '90s by Soundgarden, Moby rips his voice apart like Kurt Cobain. We're talking two first-rate singles here, ZZ Top fans.

The rest of *Animel Rights* is odd and bewildering and off and frustrating; it sounds like the album Moby might have made before, not after, *Everything Is Wrong*. That record was no masterpiece; it also willfully removed itself from the radical notions, ideas, and hunches that have long animated techno and post techno. Still, it managed spirit, vibe, flair, and—in that silly field that actually thought you could do without it—starpower. But on *Animal Rights*, Moby's insistence that rock is rock, techno is techno, and electronic intellectuals should keep to England just undoes him.

Songs like "Someone to Love," "Heavy Flow," and "You" adapt '80s hardcore spew to slightly Moby-ized hard-rock arrangements. They're about as interesting as graph paper, but Moby produces them as if his punk melodies were timeless as Lennon-McCartney. Where Aphex Twin or Underworld would have pinpointed the rage or angularity of such sources, then rerouted them into their 1996 visual and compositional equivalents, Moby just boorishly classicizes with an electronic twinge or two. A dull account of Mission of Burma's "That's When I Reach for My Revolver" explores a similar vein. By the time he's reserved almost the second half of the album for the gooey embient symphonics of simple pieces like "Face It" or the somewhat pretty Pink Floydisms of "Living," even his starpower has faded. **JAMES HUNTER**

7 BJÖRK
Telegram
Elektra

A poet raised by hippies in a country where elves are real and sex is a nervous habit, famous for more of her life than Alanis Morissette, Björk retains a singular and contrary style almost too bizarre for its own good. Let's not forget that "Birthday," her first hit with the Sugarcubes, was a song about *consensual* child molestation. Add to that a penchant for technology and a voice so jarringly emotional and passionete that it can get embarressing, and you've got a 21st-century superstar only Anthony Burgess could have dreamed up.


The question is really 'what is a classic?'
Is a classic 'classical' music? Well, obviously it isn't.
A classic is what is enduring. Philip Glass
"HEROES"
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Philip has put more of himself in this new album, but the irony is that I believe that he's actually put his finger on more of my original voice. David Bowie
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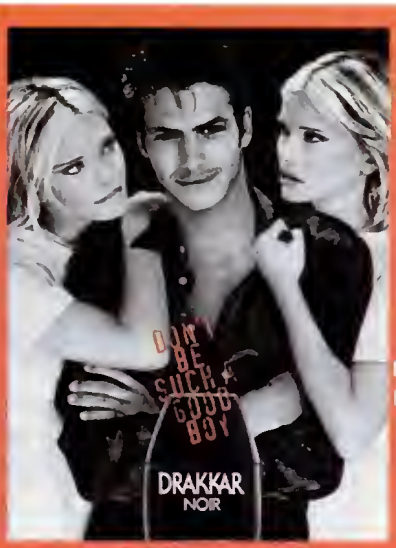

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It's typically atypical, then, that Björk should follow up her second LP, *Post*, the *Another Green World* of the lounge/rave set, with *Telegram*, a funked-up, schizophrenic *Post* redux. While other artists, including the Sugarcubes themselves, have released albums of remixed hits, Björk has rearranged nine of *Post*'s songs and added a new vibraphone-and-voice duet, "My Spine." The string quartet on "Hyperballad" that took a backseat on *Post* has taken over the *Telegram* mix, twisting around Björk's breathy growl; you no longer wonder why she's chosen to interpret Schoenberg's impossible vocal suite *Pierrot Lunaire* as a future project. On the aptly named "Further Over the Edge" mix of "Enjoy," cowritten with Tricky, she's rendered an already difficult song into an Amtrak derailment—though it still somehow echoes Devo's version

of "Working in the Coal Mine."

Yet *Telegram* also works to soothe some of *Post*'s radio unfriendliness, sloughing off jazzy pretensions to split the difference between that album and her hit *Debut*. It'd be hard to better the exotic texture of "Isobel" on *Post*, but *Telegram*'s Motown-y disco rendition holds its own, and with—gulp!—renewed hit potential. Ultimately, *Telegram* isn't so much an admission that *Post* wasn't commercially viable as an attempt to make the album more of what it already is, letting the songs breathe in a slightly different way for those of us back here in the 20th century. **JAMES HANNAHAM**

Though half the songs borrow from acid house and techno, it's the jungle tunes that have gotten the most hype. Bowie isn't the first pop act to try on the guise of Thin White Junglist. But where Everything but the Girl culled the jazzier, mellower side of drum'n'bass, Bowie's bravely trying on the harder-step stuff, which has a far cagier relationship to the marketplace—and whose partisans are more likely to tag outsiders as carpetbaggers.

Fortunately, the record's not an embarrassment at all: Bowie and co-producers Reeves Gabrels and Mark Plati have apparently done the jungle programming themselves, and they make the drums fit the songs fine. There's even some innovation here—I haven't heard any jungle track that integrates squealing lead guitar the way the first single, "Little Wonder," does; I suspect others will follow. And there's no denying that Bowie sounds jazzed.

Only problem is, jungle's great strength is to replace the first-person ego at the center of pop with a foaming, oceanic sprawl. But on tracks like "Battle for Britain (The Letter)" and "Telling Lies," Bowie's familiar, overripe sense of melodrama remains intact. The last time he gave that up was in the late '70s, when he subjected himself to Eno's indeterminacy practices; here, only on "The Last Thing You Should Do" does the music get crazed enough to unseat him.

For a taste of where this project could have gone, check out the import 12-inch of "Telling Lies," where Bowie surrenders himself to the remix (surprisingly, coproducer Plati's reconstruction is superior to that of junglist pioneer A Guy Called Gerald). Unfortunately, only DJs and heads buy 12-inches, much less import 12-inches; albums, however, are for everyone else, which may have prompted the cautiousness that keeps *Earthling* earthbound. **JEFF SALAMON**

6 DAVID BOWIE
Earthling
Virgin

David Bowie's last ten years have been as pointless as Mick Jagger's; to no avail, he's jumped from soupy art-rocker to Tin Ear Machine to Nothing Goin' on but the Trent. *Earthling* is his first credible stab at a vanguard styling since his Brian Eno days, a collection of nine tunes surfing the wave of dance music that's everyone's best bet for next big thing.

7 ELLIOTT SMITH
Either/Or
Kill Rock Stars

7 THE SOFTIES
Winter Pageant
K

Lou Barlow better watch out—Elliott Smith ends his third solo album with a fairly irresistible plea for a girl who'll be around "the morning after."

To Serge With Love

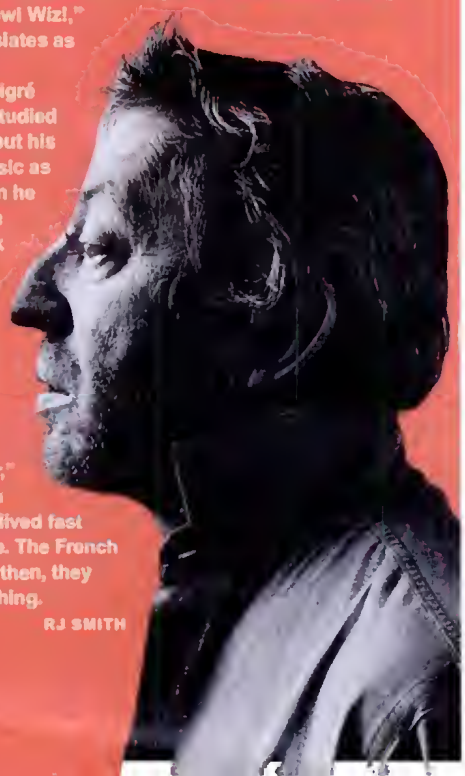
Serge Gainsbourg was an unrepentant slave to lust and liquor. He recorded "Lemon Incest" with his then 13-year-old daughter—in the video, they sang together in bed, he in pajama bottoms, she wearing the tops. He wrote tributes to anal sex. For over a quarter of a century, until his death in 1991, Gainsbourg was the love god of incredibly strange music. And the French—what a culture—they loved him for it! His lewd, literary lounge pop was banned by the Catholic Church and the BBC, yet at home he went platinum.

It's hard to separate the music from the legend of this stubble-faced libertine who smoked 60 Gitanes a day. He was linked to women as different as Juliette Greco, the existentialists' favorite cabaret singer, and Catherine Deneuve (who sang his songs) and was, um, mentor figure to the young Vanessa Paradis. His biggest hit, 1969's "Je T'aime...Moi Non Plus" was recorded as a duet with Brigitte Bardot; but when the actress got cold feet, Gainsbourg did the gentlemanly thing and recut it with his girlfriend, British actress Jane Birkin (one of *Blow-Up*'s nude dancers, and onetime wife of British composer John Barry). After this incomparable heavy-breather was released, a rumor had spread that Gainesbourg and Birkin had recorded it in bed. He was indignant: "it would have been an album, not a single."

The rest of the world has been a little slow to absorb the heat generated by this dark star, but suddenly it's catching up. Bad Seed Mick Harvey recorded an entire album of Gainsbourg songs last year, and ex–Bad Seed Barry Adamson, as well as Luna and Luscious Jackson, have covered him. In Europe, Mercury has released a box set spanning his career. It's also issued three individual collections here at home.

The three-CD *de Serge Gainsbourg à Gainsbarre* is the safest place to encounter the *louche* singer. It traces his late-'50s beginnings as a piano-playing "realist singer" in the style of Jacques Brel, through an early-'60s jazz period. His mid-'60s flowering as the Genet of cocktail hour is well documented, and the box continues on to his '70s and '80s disco and reggae excursions—though not included here, Gainsbourg even recorded a version of *La Marseillaise* set to music by Sly & Robbie.

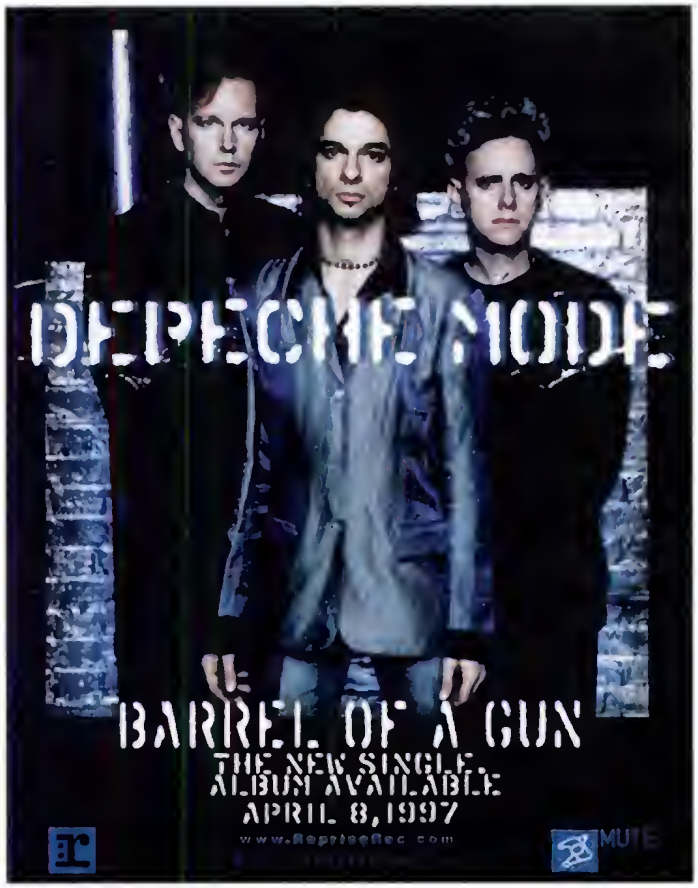
The single-disc collections break down like this: *Du Jazz Dans le Ravin* showcases his early-'60s cool jazz, heavy on the tinkling, and *Couleur Café* spotlights a flaneur's passing interest in Afro-Cuban rhythms. *Comic Strip* is the essential single disc, featuring "Je T'aime...Moi Non Plus," as well as a nutty duet with Bardot perkily scatting "Shebang! Pow! Wiz!," and a tune which translates as "Requiem for a Cunt."

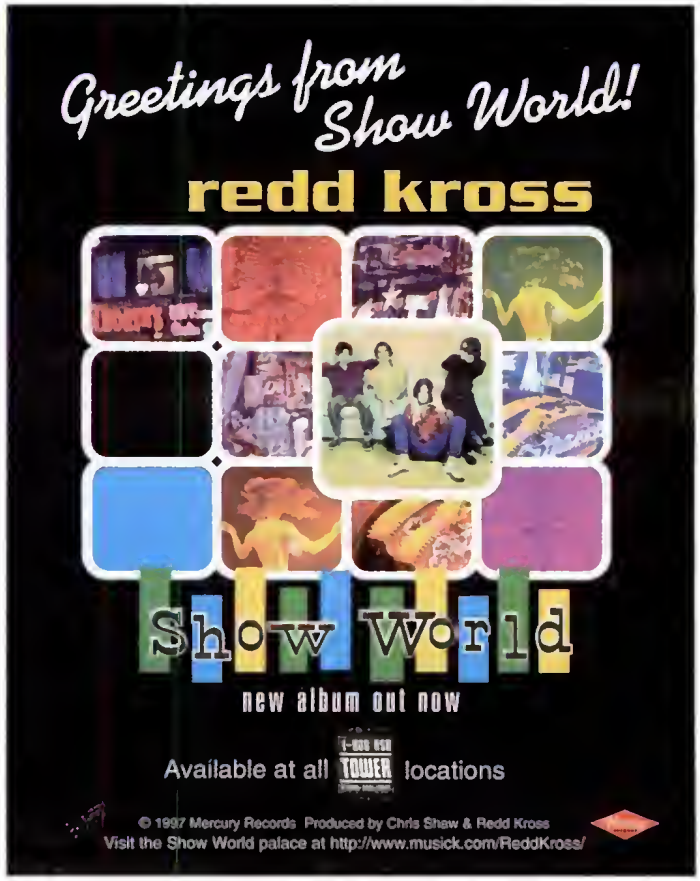


Born of Russian emigré parents, Gainsbourg studied painting, and throughout his life dismissed pop music as "a minor art." Yet when he died at the age of 62 in 1991, after a life's work of debauchery had made French toast of his liver, François Mitterand mourned him and Jacques Chirac declared him *superbe*. "Ugliness is superior to beauty, because it lasts longer," he once had the gall to proclaim. Gainsbourg lived fast and left an ugly corpse. The French have a word for it. But then, they have a word for everything.

RJ SMITH

GILLES CAPPE/STILLS/RETNA

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And Smith himself better watch out—if he gets any more charismatic, his label might have to kill him. *Either/Or* ranges from low-fi sparseness to rock with a melodicism Smith's band Heatmiser has yet to match. On "Ballad of Big Nothing," Smith makes "You can do what you want to / Whatever you want to" sound like a curse. The message? Total freedom breeds numb discontent. I guess.

Though the harrowing heroin tales of Smith's last album are gone, his frequent alcoholidays suggest a less outwardly tortured Mark Eitzel. His voice pitched between a choirboy's cry and a friend's whisper, Smith has an intimate understanding of sadness caused by bad behavior (and bad behavior caused by sadness).

While *Either/Or* benefits from a beat, Smith's frequent tourmates the Softies never add drums to their acoustic love odes. Absence of rhythm keeps their music stationary, a soundtrack for rainy day reflection. Rose Melberg and Jen Sbragia make music for indoor introverts—solitary souls who still write letters. On the surface, the Softies are akin to the cuddlecore of Cub and Heavenly, but they have more psychological depth. If "Fortune" is like a card saying "I forgive you," it's an unsentimental one, not a Hallmark.

Call them Everly Sisters, daughters of the Caravelles (an ethereal '60s female duo) or the Marine Girls (launching pad for Tracey Thorn of Everything but the Girl). Regardless, the Softies have a foolproof formula: One guitar strums chords, one picks a melody; one voice sings words, the other hums a honey-flavored harmony. Their best songs are their saddest, where the guitar line suggests something falling—leaves, rain, tears, hopes. If the division between pop and rock separates people who believe in romance and people who demystify it, the Softies walk the line with gymnastic grace. "What part did I play in making you the way you are?" Melberg asks on *Winter Pageant*'s title track. That question nails her group's appeal: a wounded wonder that doesn't succumb to cliché or cynicism. **JOHNNY HUSTON**

8 O.M.C.
How Bizarre
Mercury

A half-Maori, half-Nulean ex-hoodlum with waxen cheekbones, long sideburns, and armloads of tattoos, Pauly Fuermana never fit in anywhere as a kid, battling his way through the rough streets of Otara, South Auckland, in New Zealand. But now his music fits in almost everywhere—on *How Bizarre*, the debut disc by Otara Millionaires Club (which mainly means Fuermana himself), he invents a hybrid as varied as Beck in 1996, as unstudied as reggae in 1971, and so pop that dour mid-'90s U.S. radio might not know what to do with it.

In "How Bizarre," Fuermana hops a '69 Chevy to the circus; the song's heartwarming garage-accordion/soulchick chorus/Tijuana-brass hooks have already topped the charts everywhere from Tasmania to Toronto. (For months, New Zealanders exclaimed "how bizarre!" at even the slightest provocation.) The cha-cha lilt and car narrative reappear in the equally irresistible "Right On," which also features joyous interjections about "Buddy Toledo!" and "Dee-no Valentino." Not to mention Hawaiian guitars.

O.M.C. echo the angelic-melancholy-through-odd-instrumentation aesthetic made famous by N.Z. indie label Flying Nun. There's a similar wistfulness about women, too; Fuermana's obsessions include loafer-wearers who like Oriental cats, the one who left for America without him, and another named Seattle who'll never come back. But where Flying Nun reduced raving R&B-based Velvet Undergrooves into introverted chamber-folk, O.M.C. kick it like Coolio and Juliio down by the schoolyard. The sax in "Breaking My Heart" walks on the wild side; the rifflets in "Lingo With the Gringo" extend from the crying-at-dawn doo-wop of the Persuaders' "Thin Line Between Love & Hate."

Fuermana's P.M. Dawn–ish rap mellowness leaps effortlessly into a belted baritone, but it rarely stays there; closest precedents for his British-and-Pacific-accented soul style are forgotten unclassifiables like Billy Ocean (from Trinidad) and R.B. Greaves (from British Guyana). A nomadic misfit for life, he spends an inordinate amount of time on *How Bizarre* being chased. Subliminally inspired by Ocean's 1984 No. 1 hit "Caribbean Queen (No More Love on the Run)," Fuermana concocts a complex Polynesian polyglot of disco propulsion and detective-movie guitar twang in his dark fugitive yarn "On the Run," asking himself 100 times why he

fucked up, even hoping for a heart attack. Demonic voices inside his head remind him: "If you do the crime, you must handle the time." So he just keeps on running.

CHUCK EDDY

6 ROYAL TRUX

Sweet Sixteen
Virgin

At a show in San Francisco two years back, Neil Hagerty of Royal Trux was a paragon of rock'n'roll dudedom in his skintight leather pants, silky freak flag, and faded track marks. Until he smiled, that is, and revealed a nasty black gap where his front teeth were supposed to be. The former Pussy Galore guitarist and trailer queen Jennifer Herrema have been the cavity creeps of the anti-rock scene for more than a decade now, playing slack, scabrous music that seems

to rot from the inside out. Nevertheless, the duo were always superstars in their own minds, a curious delusion of grandeur considering that albums like 1990's *Twin Infinitives* squalled like white noise and reeked of an almost existential dissipation. Even their doomed major-label debut, *Thank You,* surveyed a bleak landscape of seedy desperados trapped more by their own diseased personalities than circumstance or fate. Unredemptive negativity rarely crosses over. But Trux's mythologized self-destruction offered cheap thrills to hipster yampires; the downward spirals of Kurt Cobain or Tupac play like Greek tragedy, theirs like the '70s cult flick *Dirty Mary, Crazy Larry.*

With *Sweet Sixteen,* though, an arena-hopeful Royal Trux turns those frowns upside down, keeping images of killing flies and "Pol pot pie" to a minimum, or as Hagerty sings on "Can't Have It Both Ways," "Got to clean as you go when you're cooking, jack." Apparently, exile from mainline street means less cocksucker blues and more Grand Funk Railroad—lots of '70s dirtbag boogie, guitar noodling, and barroom jamathons. "Roswell Seeds & Stems" is a bloated epic on the scale of "The Wreck of the Edmund Fitzgerald"; "Morphic Resident," one of the few hooky numbers, is a skid row "I Got You Babe."

The former absentee landlords have transformed into real bandleaders, and their backup—bassist Dan Brown and drummer Ken Nasta—is solidly competent, if uninspired. Not only is the timing terrible—post-rockers are finally catching on to the non-linear art of noise Trux helped pioneer, then rejected—so is the sad truth: that the glimmer twins' main charm was their utter charmlessness. "All that dirt can make you vain," sighs the reformed "Sylph of Filth." Yeah, but it can also make you interesting.

SIA MICHEL

8 VARIOUS ARTISTS

The Sugar Hill Records Story
Rhino

The Sugar Hill Records Story—a five-CD box set that chronicles six hours of the pioneering rap label's finest jams—tells the tale of how an African-American family of R&B vets and their offspring sold a ghetto phenomenon that changed the shape of pop culture and your jeans. It's a story that begins on a historic high in 1979 with the Sugarhill Gang's "Rapper's Delight," maintains the euphoria with minor variations on major rump-shaking, suddenly drops a serious bomb in '82 with Grandmaster Flash & the Furious Five's "The Message," and soon becomes erratic until the good times peter out.

Even in the essays included in the set's packaging, hip-hop is depicted as the street DJ's victory over disco. But the tracks tell another story. The Sugar Hill sound is the instrumental approximation of a DJ's deconstruction of the disco groove, one that fought the strings and frills of the post–*Saturday Night Fever* club sound, but nevertheless embraced its percussion breaks, bass booms, horn blasts, swift BPMs, seamless framework and wacky hedonism. Like the old-time R&B labels, Sugar Hill boasted a hard-hitting house band—guitarist Bernard "Skip" Alexander, bassist Doug Wimbish, drummer Keith LeBlanc, percussionist Ed "Duke Bootie" Fletcher, and the Chops horns. They

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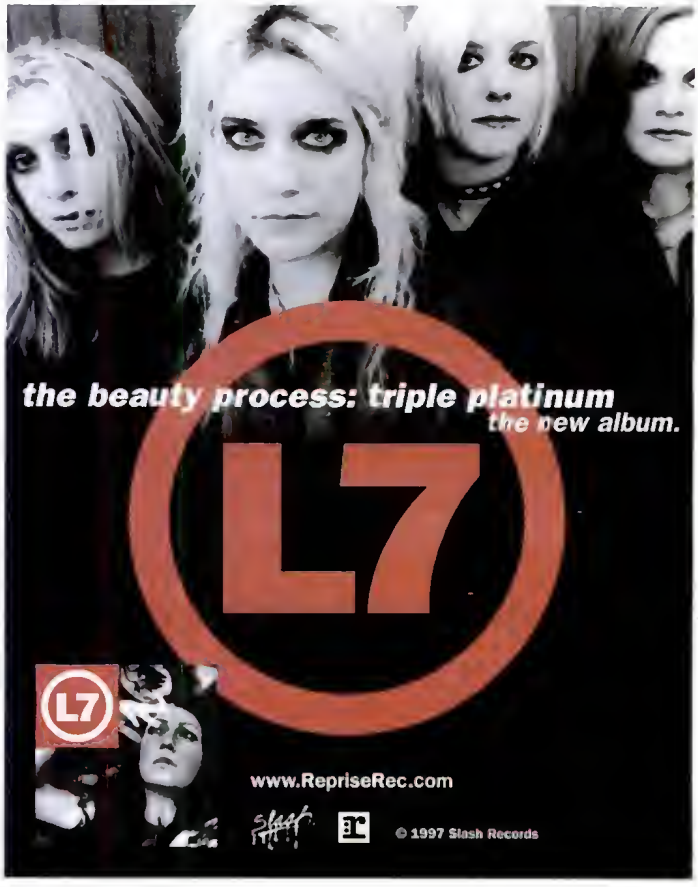

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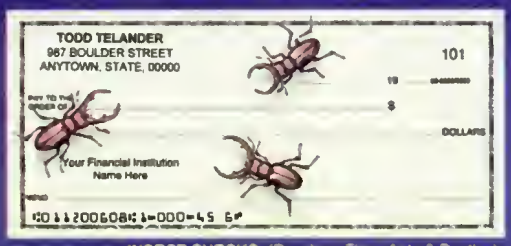

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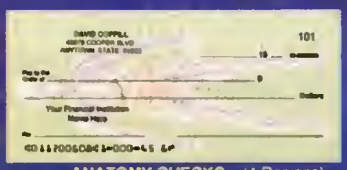

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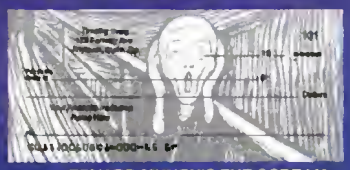
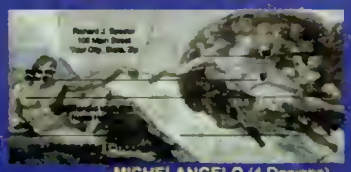


EDVARD MUNCH'S THE SCREAM

SKULLS



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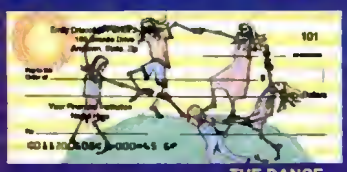

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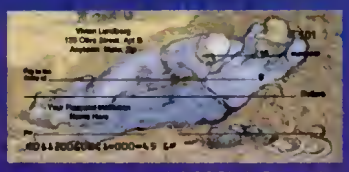

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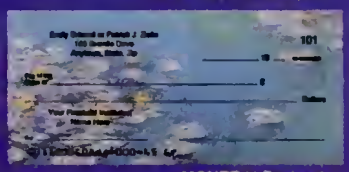

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defined not only the sound of Sugar Hill, but all rap records until Afrika Bambaataa's "Planet Rock" replaced interplay between musicians with the metallic kling-klang of the computerized one-man-band.

The failure to distinctively assimilate the beatbox battalion's more aggressive attack led to Sugar Hill's demise, here captured by the set's below-par fifth disc, which showcases how Melle Mel's "Message"-era intensity turned to bombast after splitting from Grandmaster Flash. Still, it's striking how *fresh* most of this stuff still sounds. The hotel/motel/Holiday Inn rhymes of the early cuts may be fluff, but it's uplifting

fluff with a sense of discovery.

Label cofounder Sylvia Robinson (the gal that cooed the '70s sleaze-cheese classic, "Pillow Talk") put women on the mike and mixed rhyme with song as early as Sugar Hill's second single, Sequence's sassy "Funk You Up," and her influential mix of industry independence and soul savvy repeatedly turn the party out. Homophobia grows as rappers take on the perceived ills of city life, but the racism, misogyny, gun-worshipping, and petty MC battles that bog down even today's pop-hip-hop are scarce. When Spoonie Gee and the Sequence throw down the rap version of those Godzilla vs. Mothra movies on "Monster Jam," or when a wide-eyed Funky 4 + 1 trade rhymes as if speaking with one ecstatic voice on "That's the Joint," you may find yourself forced to grab a fly girl, get some spank, and drive off in a def O.J. **BARRY WALTERS**

5 BLOODHOUND GANG
One Fierce Beer Coaster
Republic/Geffen

In 1987, the Bloodhound Gang would have been easy to understand and deride as a hastily concocted and obviously industry-initiated attempt to mop up the frat boys and suburbanites slavering for a fast follow-up to *Licensed to Ill*. A decade later, now that the Beastie Boys are Buddhists and businessmen, now that they play *flutes*, the Bloodhound Gang are a living, breathing, gas-expelling homage to another era.

Initially, the very notion of Bloodhound auteur Jimmy Pop Ali—who affects the grimy persona of a snot-gobbling, sweat-stained lump of couch crap with one hand on the remote and the other down his pants—is enough to evoke a rosy glow of nostalgia. Not only does Ali spatter his repertoire—fuzzed-up jerk-rock boasting a range of influences that run the gamut from "Fight for Your Right" to "No Sleep 'til Brooklyn"—with '80s tube ephemera and reeking-poo humor, but he has innate awareness of his own position in the firmament. His band's 1995 "Soul Makossa"–sampling "Mama Say" was a vague attempt to be down, but the deadpan thrashalong breakthrough Bloodhound hit "Fire Water Burn" comes right out and states that, for a white guy in the hip-hop game, the only available role is that of jackass.

The thing about a rosy glow of nostalgia is that it soon cools off. The Bloodhound Gang entered SPIN's last "Worst Band in America" contest. In common with most of the other wretches, you could feel them *trying* to be funny. Here, whether Ali's striving for the "he-said-a-durty word!" gross-out on "Kiss Me Where It Smells Funny," or droning through the Borscht Belt Weezer of "Your Only Friends Are Make Believe," he's drowning in flop sweat.

He's got one good gag, though (two, if you count the "Fire Water Burn" video's Matt Pinfield parody). On the song "Boom," he battles Vanilla Ice. Rob Van Winkle (as he's billed here) still thinks he can hang and spews up some of that "I'm-gonna-I'm-gonna" pugilistic shit. Ali, faced with an opponent who still takes himself seriously, unleashes a couple of his choicest couplets: "I squeak like Stephen Hawkins [sic], yeah, but I'm walkin' "; "Like a Kenny Loggins record, no one's ever gonna hear ya." Even better, Ali forces Ice to chant along with the chorus, which turns out to be "Tah Rah Rah Boom Dee Ay" from *Oliver!*

Like an unexpected stumble over a *Meatballs* sequel on the USA Network, the Bloodhound Gang makes you think, "Remember when I used to laugh at this?" And you smile. And then you think, "Remember when I used to laugh at this?" And this time you're not smiling.

JONATHAN BERNSTEIN

SINGLES

by Charles Aaron

With a nod to the recording industry's financial woes—so, we replaced all our vinyl with CDs, now what?—here's a column of all-independent releases (with Bis being the only semi-ringer). Just because Hootie blew, employees got fired, and chain stores closed, doesn't mean it was a bad period for actual music.

BIS, *This Is Teen-C Power!* EP (Grand Royal/Capitol) If you loved Bikini Kill, Huggy Bear, Bratmobile, or Cibo Matto, then you may hate Bis, a Scottish, post-riot-grrrl trio that gleefully bites from all of the above. Their synth-pop singalongs beat their punky provocations ("Kill Your Boyfriend," again?), and luckily, their best song, "This Is Fake D.I.Y.," pokes fun at the whole sordid business.

FURRY THINGS, *Hedfones* EP (Trance Syndicate) Once a likably shy feedback-pop band, this Austin, Texas, quartet is now sprawling headlong into electronica—oceanic guitars, sedate bass-and-drum dubs, quietly squalling samples—with a still-likable, but-not-so-shy curiosity. On the five songs here, they tend toward fractured melodies rather than formal doodling (see Tortoise, et al.), while "Diskoteque" is an indie-femme tribute to PiL's spiky "dance" beats. The final two tracks feel like riding a roller coaster and a carousel underwater; then a fuzzy guitar solo floats by to save the day.

J-LIVE, "Can I Get It?" / "Hush the Crowd" and "Braggin' Writes (Domecracker Remix)" (Raw Shack) My personal adviser DJ Zen sums it up: "He's just on some good ol' early Native Tongues party shit, some 'Buddy' shit," referring to the group jam featuring De La Soul, A Tribe Called Quest, and the Jungle Brothers, which defined hip-hop at its late-'80s best—crafty, conversational, cool. Currently the dopest unsigned MC working, Jean-Jacques "J-Live" Cadet could be Posdnuos's down-to-earth, uptown brother, taking the subway, calling out perps, just *living*. And Georges Sulmers's production opens bright windows rather than lingering in dark corners.

MAKE-UP, "Substance Abuse" / "Under the Impression" and "Have U Heard the Tape?" (Time Bomb/Dischord) From the guys who brought sassy fashion sense to D.C. hardcore, and whose *13-Point Program to Destroy America* suggested pajamas as the uniform of revolution, it's Make-Up (ex-Nation of Ulysses dudes, plus bassist/ex-Frumpie Michelle Mae). Fronting a stripped-down, new-wavey garage band with songs as stylish as his hair, singer Ian Svenonius testifies like a sexy, straight-edge camp counselor: "You say you've got nothing to lose / What'd the truth ever do for you?"

OMNI TRIO, *The Haunted Trax EP* (sm:)e) On his recent *Haunted Science* album, Rob Haigh's drum'n'bass vistas—silly strings, Keith Jarrett piano whimsy—skip the trite fandango, like the Manhattan Transfer lost at a rave in "Birdland." But with this four-song EP, the over-30, Brit record-store proprietor sucks in his millennial gut and delivers. Away from the album's too-smooth milieu, "Serpent Navigators" feels like a restless, soulful classic. And the non-album "Tuff Side" is fiercely sketched beat poetry—snare and bass lines scattered all over the page.

SCOUT, "Plague Dogs" / "Breathcatches" (Deep Elm) This New York City pop-rock trio is singer/guitarist Ashen Kellyn and two guys, and while she's not a singular artist like PJ Harvey or a soul sister like Kim Deal, Keilyn is obviously a strong girl with a vision—I see, uh, Veruca Salt minus the nasty backlash. The A side crunches and sneers (but in a nice way, with a priceless *na na na* chorus), while the flipside is one of those kiss-off songs that turns you on like a radio.

DEEP ELM, PO Box 1965, New York, NY 10156; **RAW SHACK,** 857 Atlantic Ave., #5, Brooklyn, NY 11238; **SM:)E,** 740 Broadway, New York, NY 10003; **TIME BOMB/DISCHORD,** 3819 Beecher St. NW, Washington, DC 20007-1802; **TRANCE SYNDICATE,** PO Box 49771, Austin, TX 78765.

Bis, from left, Sci-Fi Steven, Manda Rin, and John Disco.

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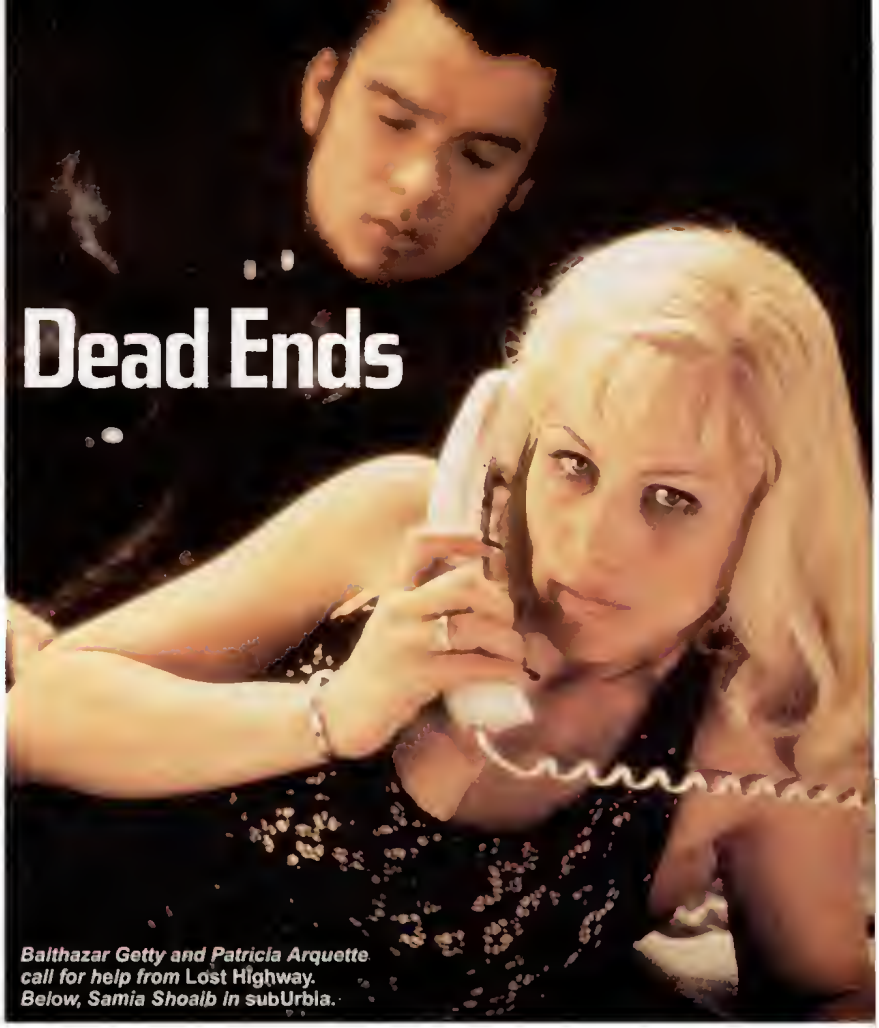
by Michael Atkinson

Wrong Turns and Dead Ends



Balthazar Getty and Patricia Arquette call for help from Lost Highway. *Below, Samia Shoaib in* subUrbia.

Lost Highway
Directed by David Lynch
October Films

subUrbia
Directed by Richard Linklater
Castle Rock/Sony Pictures Classics

The time has come again for us to consider the inscrutable case of David Lynch. For his first four films or so, Lynch seemed a fully realized American visionary, simultaneously making the cosmic uncomfortably intimate and giving the ugly secret life of humans an empyrean majesty. No other filmmaker had ever been so adroit at smearing universal subconscious meat and marrow across our brainpans.

Today, more than ten years since *Blue Velvet* strapped Lynch's own psychosexual dilemmas to a cross and posted it upon the Golgotha of "the American art film," and close to 20 since *Eraserhead*'s mildewy assault on narrative convention, Lynch seems to be in a state of crisis, lost between instinct and effect, vision and pretension, archetype and cliché. With the success of the tame *Twin Peaks* series and the idiosyncratic doom of everything he's done since, he now seems less a cohesive artist than a tortured consciousness-in-progress. Images from his films remain unmistakably his, the new ***Lost Highway*** being no exception. Divided neatly between the electrifying and the tiresome, the movie contains the most breathless work Lynch has produced since *Blue Velvet*, struggling to break free.

The problem is, of course, trying to differentiate between what Lynch is struggling against and what he's struggling toward—they seem to be one and the same. *Lost Highway*'s first half is an astonishingly chilling exploration of marital anxiety, in which suspicious jazz musician/Lynch doppelgänger Bill Pullman and brunette-bewigged wife Patricia Arquette are "visited" in their L.A. apartment by an unknown force, which videotapes them as they sleep. (The tapes are left on their doorstep.) The druggy action is almost abstract—as when Pullman literally discovers and wordlessly explores a secret room hiding in the shadows of his bedroom hallway—and is often horrifying. (Lynch is abetted in his textures by the soundtrack presences of Trent Reznor and Marilyn Manson.) The suspicion that Arquette may be having an affair perverts the film's entire universe, down to the wicked confrontation at a party between Pullman and Robert Blake as a white-faced homunculus who insists he is in Pullman's apartment as they speak. Pullman calls to verify, and it's true—an incredibly powerful dream evocation of infidelity. Soon enough, a videotape arrives wherein Pullman is standing over the butchered corpse of Arquette, landing him on death row.

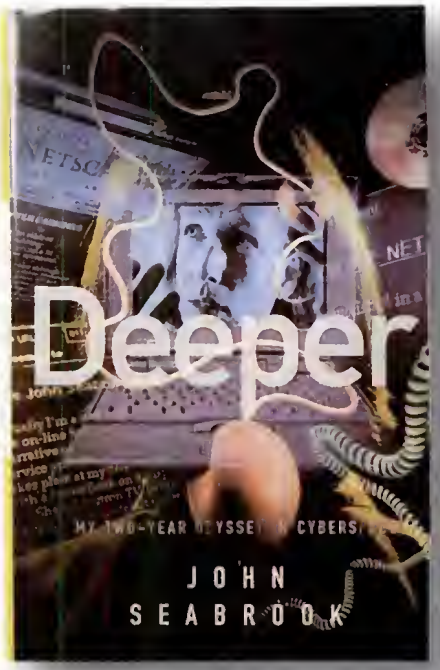
The connubial heebie-jeebies don't linger. Somehow, Pullman is transformed in his cell into battered mechanic Balthazar Getty, who upon being released is soon involved with the vampy blonde girlfriend (also Arquette) of psycho gangster Robert Loggia, and it's this timeworn, posey noir tale that drags *Lost Highway* onto exhausted asphalt. While still fascinated by parallel dream worlds and divided consciousness, Lynch cannot get herd-boiled pulp out of his system, even though he has no affinity for it and by 1997 it's got nowhere left to go. (Cowriting with *Wild at Heart* author Barry Gifford doesn't help.) Since so much of what Lynch does is deep-cutting and resonant, it becomes difficult to understand why he holds faith with such unoriginal material. *Lost Highway* eventually heads back into pure hallucination (Pullman and Blake both return, but it's hard to say why), and the metaphysical ambiguities remain properly unresolved. However he may fail to meet his own extraordinary standards, you get the sense that Lynch isn't surrendering. Neither should we.

As distinctive if not nearly as apocalyptic an auteur, Richard Linklater may have hit his short career's first ebb with the new ***subUrbia,*** but it's still a significant hunk of young American turf he's proved only he can film convincingly. An essentially faithful adaptation of Eric Bogosian's play about post–high school slackers killing time in a convenience store parking lot in Any Small-Town Shithole, USA, the film retains Bogosian's formulaic structure, but like Linklater's *Slacker, Dazed and Confused,* and *Before Sunrise,* it bursts with precisely observed reality. Effortlessly funny, Linklater's film is also devastating and spooky in its dead-on rendering of middle-class, Middle America nothingness. The crew is paradigmatic: Jeff, the semi-cultured cynic (Giovanni Ribissi) who still lives with his parents; Buff, the relentless buzzhound (Steve Zahn); Tim, the quiet sociopath (Nicky Katt); Sooze, the talentless but ambitious punkette (Amie Carey); and Pony, the returning high school folkie–turned–rock star (Jayce Bartok), whose limo arrival brings things to a theatrical head.

Bogosian provides the characters with the bullshit they use to spackle in the gaps of their lives, but in anyone's hands except Linklater's it could've been *St. Elmo's Fire* for the '90s. It's all in the rhythms, which are letter-perfect, and in the acting—Ribissi is disturbingly believable as the movie's central lost boy, and Zahn's empty party beast is particularly terrifying and real. *SubUrbia* is nearly enthropological in its charting of what might be the quintessential American teenage experience. If you haven't lived it, the movie might bounce off you. If you have, it's mesmerizing. ●

PRINTED MATTER

by Laura Miller



Pilgrim's Progress

Deeper: My Two-Year Odyssey in Cyberspace
By John Seabrook
Simon & Schuster

If anything as vast and baggy as the Internet can be said to have a house style, it's attitude: a cocky, often cynical, know-it-all pose. But the truth is, nobody really knows where the medium is going; enormous changes at the last minute are the order of the day. Still, there's money to be made and attention to be had if you can convince some rich, bewildered dupe that you surf the cutting edge and have all the answers.

Which makes John Seabrook's *Deeper* both surprising and refreshing. The *New Yorker* staff writer began his journey by writing a profile of Bill Gates in 1994, "E-mail From Bill," which provoked a venomous e-mail assault that in turn inspired another *New Yorker* essay, "My First Flame." Thus Seabrook became a digital everyman for the technically nervous literati, people plagued by a nagging sense that they really ought to get online, even though the whole thing intimidates and confuses them.

For the role, Seabrook adopts a faux-naïf tone that would be annoying in most other contexts. In a subculture rife with smarty-pants sneerers and proselytizing gurus, his gee-willikers enthusiasm seems both brave and humble. He's not afraid to admit he's a clueless newbie or to recount the most embarrassing skirmishes in his transformation into a "digital guy." But don't think that the wet behind his ears signifies any empty space between them. When he needs to, Seabrook can haul out Ralph Waldo Emerson, William Blake, and Lewis Mumford with the best of them. Fortunately, the philosophizing (what is it about the subject of the Net that brings out the gasbag in people?) is well-grounded in nitty-gritty reports from the field.

As in Elizabeth Kubler-Ross's model of grief, the initiation of a digital guy (or girl) proceeds in stages. First comes fear. Seabrook worries about missing the high-tech boat ("My education, and my profession—this making of small nuanced judgments about words, were useless in the modern world. I had blown it"), frets about becoming a nerd, and is forever wondering if he's violating some unspoken point of netiquette. Then he experiences the keen thrill of finally connecting, however banal the response: "This is *great*," he chirps at receiving e-mail.

After a period of woozy utopianism ("Chance connections happened constantly, but at a level deeper than coincidence, it seemed to me—down at a level the nineteenth-century transcendentalists called 'the eternal correspondence of all things' "), Seabrook gets that first, nasty flame. Suddenly, he's convinced that the flamer has e-mailed a data-eating virus into his laptop. "It was...like someone had broken into my head. It was the same feeling of being wired into each other's minds that I enjoyed in e-mail, but this was not enjoyable at all," he writes and we realize that this panic is that blip of dread—*What am I opening myself up to?*—that precedes the plunge into any serious love affair.

Seabrook dabbles in Web surfing, Usenet group lurking, and those cheesy AOL sex chats that make the letters in porn magazines look like Nabokov. He finally settles into the WELL, a California-based BBS, where he encounters the heart of the online experience (for everyone who doesn't just use the Internet for games and downloading software): other people.

Ultimately, what Seabrook discovers is that life in cyberspace is "just real life after all." Like any serious netizen he recaps the entire history of human social relations—including various starry-eyed dreams, dead-ends, and near-apocalypses—to find himself back at a basic equation: to reap the rewards of community, you've got to give a little, play nice, and hold your temper. It's kindergarten stuff, really, but Seabrook shows how it can feel like both the loftiest intellectual experiment and the dirtiest trench war.

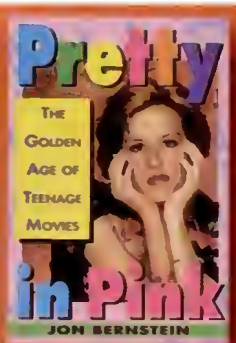
His idealism long jettisoned, Seabrook ends on the only mournful note in this perky memoir. Cyberspace isn't the pristine wilderness his pioneer forefathers explored: "to find the frontier these days, you have to look inside your own mind, and while that is interesting, and certainly more convenient, it isn't the same thing." True enough. In fact, it's better. ●

A Supposedly Fun Thing I'll Never Do Again
By David Foster Wallace
Little, Brown

The great thing about David Foster Wallace, in his Dumpster-size novel *Infinite Jest* and now in this savvy collection of nonfiction, is how lightly he wears his odd genius. One minute he'll twist himself up into a hyper-cerebral aria about how, say, tennis and calculus intertwine, and the next he'll label himself a "lazy turd" and mutter about his life as a teenage jock. Wallace calls the seven impressionistic essays here "big experimental postcards," and the description is apt. He rummages around in pop topics such as state fairs, cruise ships, David Lynch movies, and TV overload, and always faxes back searing images. "I have smelled what suntan lotion smells like," he writes about his cruise, "spread over 21,000 pounds of hot flesh."

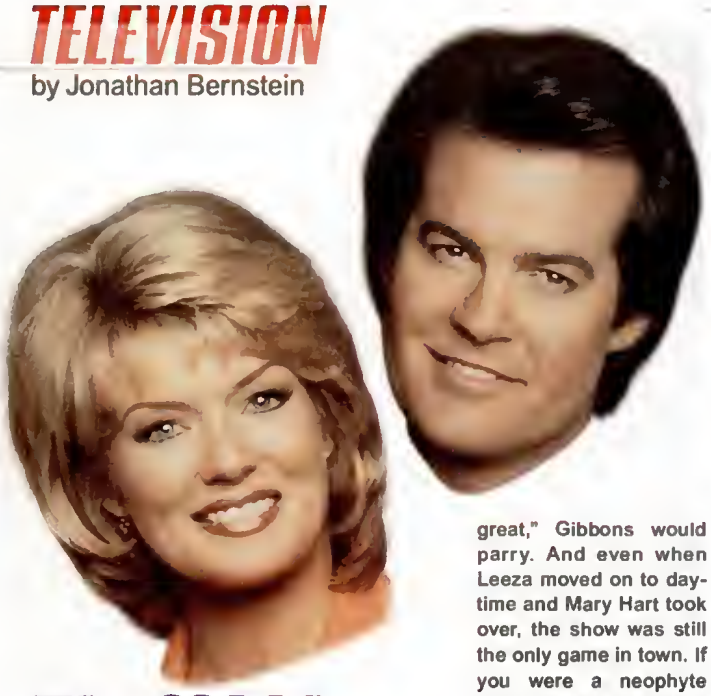
DWIGHT GARNER

SPINAUTHORS



In Contributing Editor Jonathan Bernstein's *Pretty in Pink: The Golden Age of Teenage Movies*, recently published by St. Martin's/Griffin we learn that "*Porky's* was the *Pulp Fiction* of its day," discover the contemporary whereabouts of Scott Baio and Corey Feldman, read a learned disquisition on how and why *St. Elmo's Fire* spelled death for the '80s Hollywood Brat Pack, and—most astonishingly—encounter irrefutable evidence that Bernstein has watched *Meatballs 3* the whole way through.

by Jonathan Bernstein



Fluff Wars

As *Entertainment Tonight* faces the Clooney blockade, other magazine shows close in on the fading colossus of puffery.

IT'S OFFICIAL! THERE are now more shows about entertainment than there is actual entertainment. Whether there's an obscenely excessive film premiere, a handsomely remunerated jock launching his own cologne, or a bunch of barely literate country singers combining their star power to launch a new theme restaurant, there's a phalanx of crack reporters with immobile hair and gleaming teeth ready to report the event like they were announcing a cure for cholera.

For years, ***Entertainment Tonight*** was the franchise. Exuding the demeanor of a friendly dentist and his dishy assistant, John Tesh and Leeza Gibbons became so adept at the exclusive star interview which revealed absolutely nothing that, at their peak, they made Barbara Walters look like Adolf Eichmann. The vanilla duo also skated through those tricky post-segment moments where a little spontaneous repartee was called for. "Faith Ford. Talented lady," Tesh would thrust. "Yes. She's great," Gibbons would parry. And even when Leeza moved on to daytime and Mary Hart took over, the show was still the only game in town. If you were a neophyte hunk or starlet, it was de rigueur for you to end your 30-second segment by curtsying and mumbling "Thank you, *E.T.*" to the camera.

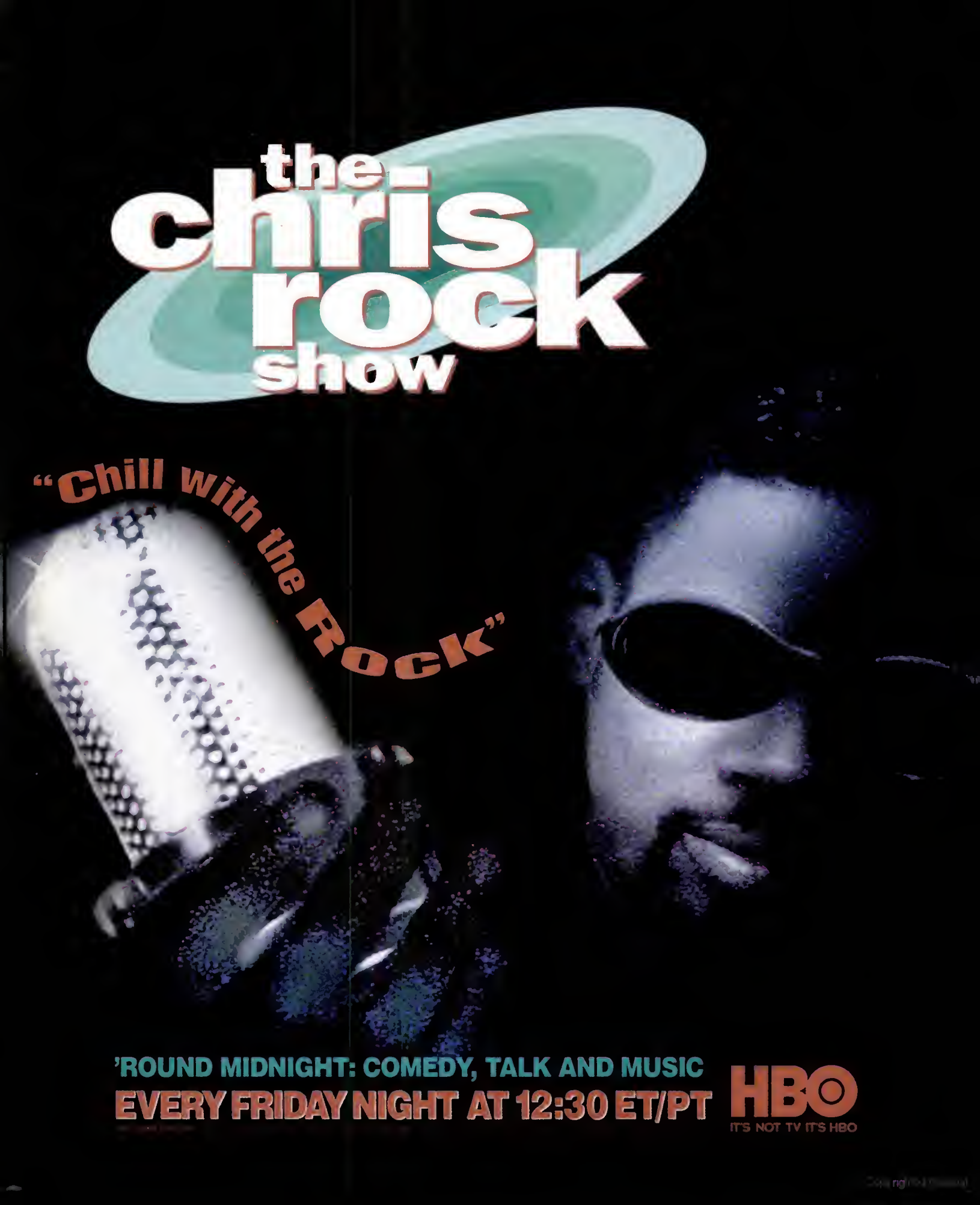
The stand-alone days of fortress *E.T.* are, however, ancient history. Tesh has abandoned an easy gig to live off his crap music (many have wondered if the strange new feedback-filled, dissonant arrangement of the show's chirpy theme is an oblique comment on his departure). And now this most inoffensive of shows, which exists only to puff, was publicly shunned by one of the very celebs on which it dotes. Smarting over the tactics of one of *Hard Copy*'s sneaky freelance videorazzis, George Clooney last year made an example out of shocked, blameless *E.T.*, a sister show to *Hard Copy* at Paramount. No more friendly set visits, no more movie footage, no shots of him playing one-on-one with Bob Goen. Clooney's *E.T.* embargo spread like ebola. His *E.R.* colleagues, Dean Cain, Whoopi Goldberg, Rosie O'Donnell, and Madonna all reportedly approved of Clooney's decision to make himself unavailable and were toying with the notion of following suit.

Proving that the secret of comedy is timing, *l'affaire* Clooney occurred just as *E.T.* was fending off competition from another of the shows aiming at muscling in on its territory. Boasting in Larry Mendte a male host unafraid to face the camera without his profession's requisite petrified hair and tandoori facial features, ***Access Hollywood*** didn't exactly have depth but it certainly had length, daring to run stories that lasted a little longer than *E.T.*'s two-minute message. What might hamper its rise is its weird sibling show, ***Extra,*** scheduled immediately before *Access Hollywood* in most markets. *Extra* was Warners' original attempt to squash *E.T.* It had buffed and coiffed hosts proficient in "talented lady" talk, it had a presence at premieres and parties, but it never gelled and now languishes as part star-stroker, part tabloid snooper; forever hoping for a tête-à-tête with Skeet Ulrich but settling for a foot fetishist's mumbled confessions.

The recently canceled ***Scoop With Sam & Dorothy*** was a harebrained attempt to mate *E.T.* with a *Regis & Kathie Lee* format. Not only did the sparks fail to fly between longtime showbiz bottom-feeders Sam Rubin and Dorothy Lucey, but in one of the *better* weeks, the talent bookers hauled in two members of the cast of *Savannah* and the girl who plays John Lithgow's secretary on *3rd Rock*. The latter-mentioned celeb also shows up sporadically on BET's bargain-basement entertainment magazine, ***Screen Scene,*** which has to whip up excitement over a set visit to *The Steve Harvey Show* or a listening party for Da Brat's new joint. CNN's *Showbiz Today* attempts to transcend its fluffy mandate by hauling in industry analysts to predict coming trends and crack the code of the weekend grosses. This doesn't disguise the fact that its Q&A sessions are as fawning as anything Julie Moran does on *E.T.*

Left, Mary Hart and Bob Goen of Entertainment Tonight. *Above, Libby Weaver and Brad Goode of* Extra. *Below, Steve Kmetko of* E! News Daily.

For a brief shining moment, though, entertainment television grew fangs and claws. A couple of years ago, the E! channel hired onetime network anchor Kathleen Sullivan to be the public face of its gavel-to-gavel O.J. coverage. Once the trial ended, E! paired Sullivan with Steve Kmetko, the rakish host of ***E! News Daily.*** What was it thay said about Astaire and Rogers? That he gave her class and she gave him sex? Well, Kmetko brought out the waspish, slit-eyed, thin-lipped bitch in Sullivan. And she did the same for him! Less cheerleaders than vampires, Sullivan and Kmetko speculated on the durability of showbiz relationships, commented unfavorably on the physical appearances of interview subjects, and, after a story celebrating a new Mariah Carey chart-topper, Sullivan snapped, "I'm sick of that already." It was too good to last. Sullivan started sporting a garish two-tone do. Her appearances grew sporadic. Then she was let go, her queenly bearing, apparently, too much for even E! to tolerate. Without her bad influence, Kmetko reverted to his natural blandness and the waters of entertainment television turned calm again. ●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THE FUTURE SOUND OF U2

continued from page 50

wandering the Clarence's pristine, eiry halls these days. Bono, Edge, and prominent Dublin entrepreneur Harry Crosby purchased the building in 1992, and converted it to a luxury hotel. The new Clarence presents an atmosphere both spare and sumptuous. It spacious rooms, appointed with engular Bauhaus-inspired furniture, feature an assortment of subtle conveniences only a much-traveled rock star would think to include: generous closets, comfortable reading chairs, powerful showers, good reading lights, and e room-service menu thet far outclasses the average inn's dreaded club-sandwich-end-pizza fare. You want Thei coconut soup or cappucino tiramisu et 4 A.M.? Book a room here.

According to Edge, the heert of his and Bono's interest in the Clarence has nothing to do with personal nostalgia, or the wish to have a nice spot to put up Christy Turlington when she comes to town. It's all about what lurks in the hotel's basement. There, the singer and guitarist have established e club thet's become the center of Dublin's post-rock underground.

As U2 consume their spiced pies at Hanover one Thursday night, the Kitchen rapidly fills with kids in pajama-ish rave gear, dancing end chatting and making out to the sounds of visiting London DJ Justin Roberts. Behind e heavy curtain guerded by e weethered Hell's Angel type lies the club's exclusive back ber. Tonight, it's filled with legends of Dublin's night life, including noir cabaret singer Gavin Fridey, who's widely acknowledged as Bono's right-hand man; actress Veronica Quilligen, who sterred in Neil Jordan's first film when she was only 16; Peter Rowan, U2's *Wer* boy, now a handsome tough embarking on an ecting career; and Guggi, along with Fridey a former member of the legendary punk band the Virgin Prunes, whose quiet, mysticel drawings edorn many of the Clarence's rooms.

A little efter 2 A.M., the mood in the room warps and expands as Bono, Edge, Flood, Howie, end severel other studio rats wind in and towerd the ber. Bono sits down next to me and begins, as he is wont to do, to chat about redemption. We're discussing what rock'n'roll meant to us as teens, how it can feel like the only religion thet matters. "There's something about that adolescent state when you're really open that's worth hanging on to," he reflects. I ask him how his sense of spiritueiity has chenged since he was bowled over by faith as e boy. "In faith, there's different elements," he replies. "There's karme, living right, but then you've got grece. And grace comes out of nowhere. it can come from any corner."

He continues to wax philosophical, but we're distracted by a pouty blonde who's teken the seat beside us. "Excuse me," Bono apologizes. "I have to telk to her. She's been waiting." At first the woman seems angry that Bono doesn't place her. Soon enough, though, she's forgiven the sight, and is deep in discussion with the singer. Then he gets her laughing. "Let's rescue him," motions e longtime Principie employee. We do, hending him a fresh drink. The woman wanders off, satisfied.

Bono is famous for such people skiils. Here in Dublin, he and his bandmates walk e line between notoriety and warm welcome—they're internationai stars, end deai with the eduietion end enmity fame elways brings, but they're aiso bloody determined to remain locals. Rather then violating his privecy, he considers his ebiiity to move through Dublin like a normai person e pert of that privacy—a right the city offers him in return for the generosity he displays toward its citizens.

"There are seven women who work in that pub, end they're eii named Angeia," he informs me one

"My strongest trait is curiosity," says Bono. "I'm just lifting stones, you know, opening doors. Looking out windows, around corners, up skirts."

afternoon when we've stopped for a pint. One of the seven Angelas has just walked by and enjoyed a brief conversation with him. It's a sunny day, so we've taken our Guinness across the street to the river's edge, and Bono waves and yells whenever a passing car gives him a honk. He never seems to tire of the attention. "I'm not very inhibited," he says, stating the obvious. "My strongest trait is curiosity. I'm just lifting stones, you know, opening doors. Looking out windows, around corners, up skirts."

This mischievous Bono is a recent incarnation. For years his fans thought Bono a saint, and critics accused him of playing that role falsely even when he was just trying to be himself. "I used to think that my image was something to live up to," he says. "Now I feel it's almost a duty to let people down." The only way Bono could dodge his own shadow was by assuming its cartoonish opposite—becoming MacPhisto or the Fly, modern devils as degraded as his previous public self was holy. "One thing I might regret from early times was just showing that one side of me," he says. "The egomaniac was always there, too. And some people have always seen me with horns."

In Dublin, Bono surrounds himself with people who see him with neither horns nor halo, friends he's had for 20 years and workmates who understand his regular side. Like Edge and Mullen, he also keeps his family here. Ali and Bono have been together since high school, a shocking fact considering the average length of most marriages, let alone relationships cultivated by rock stars. "It's beyond love, marriage, death, friendship," he says. "We're onto some other thing. We're closer than most people are, and yet capable of being at a great distance physically. It's amazing how it works out."

Family is a crucial aspect of U2's Dublin life. Larry, Ann, and their new baby have a home here; Edge maintains strong ties to the city because of his three children, who still live with their mother. At 12, his oldest daughter, Holly, is a rock-'n'roll kid. "I *think* I've heard her say good things about us," says Edge a little nervously. "But we haven't actually released a record other than Passengers since she got into music. When *Zooropa* came out, she was nine."

He pauses to reflect, the picture of the nervous dad trying not to fall into the generation gap. "It will be interesting to see what she thinks of this record." Fractured dance-rock not her usual fare? "Actually, she seems to be into Oasis. But they're not her favorite group."

Who is, then?

Consternation fills Edge's normally placid face. "I'm trying to remember," he laughs. "I actually wouldn't like to say, because if I get it wrong, I'm dead."

Summer is long gone when I hear from Bono again; *Pop* has broken all of U2's deadlines, but the singer has shed the anxiety that sometimes crept into his voice during the album's making. Instead, when he calls me from Miami one Thursday night, he's positively joyful, enjoying a particularly sweet seduction—the thrill of falling in love with something of your creation.

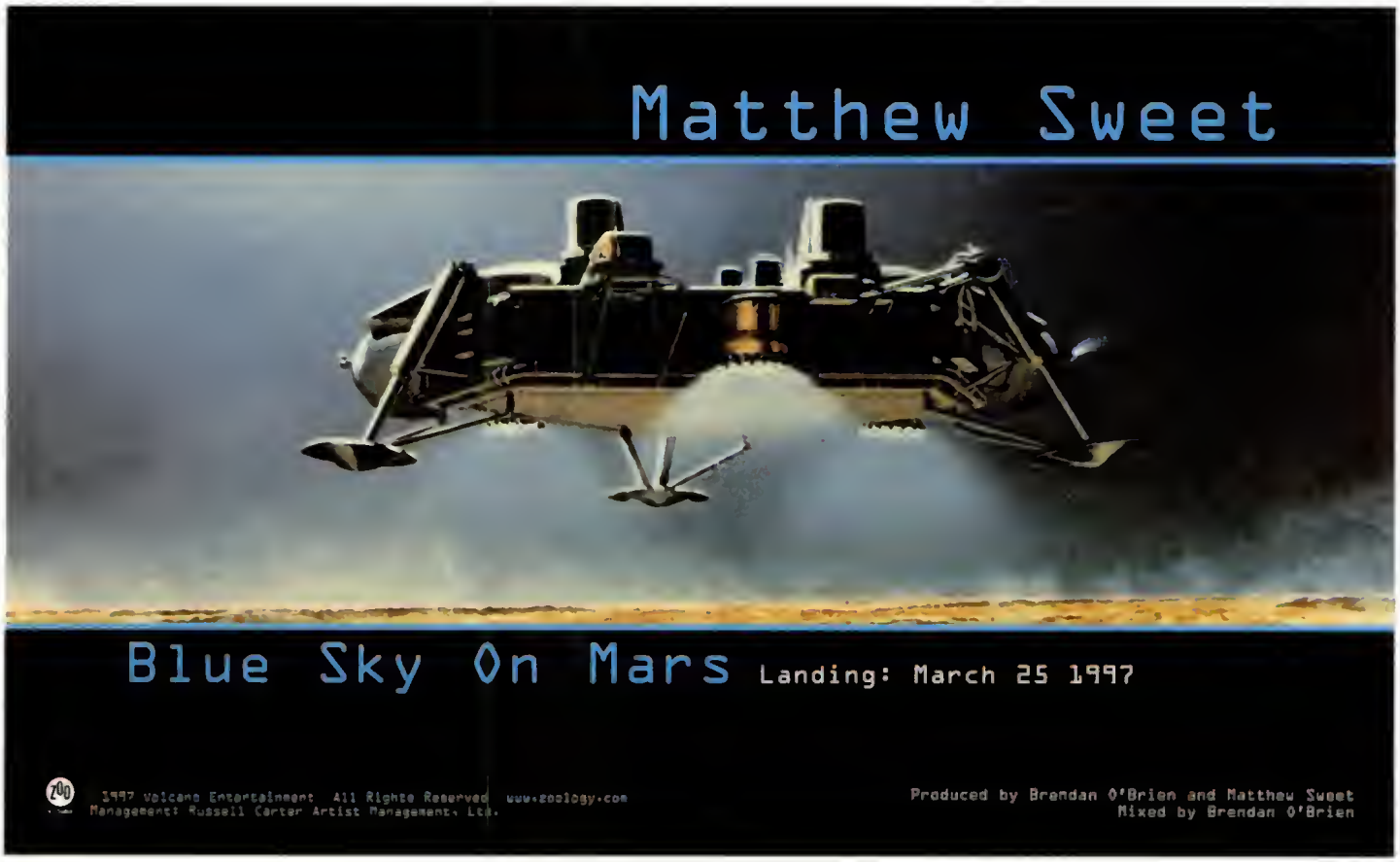
"We finished the album yesterday at about seven in the morning," he tells me. "We'd tried to finish in six months, but we couldn't. Somewhere along the line we realized we'd never made a record in six months. We were trying to put together such disparate elements. Flood was, in the end, the man. We bought him a spiky helmet from the World War I era, to help him rein us all in."

Bono's eager to describe *Pop* in detail, every cut, every groove. "When the record opens, it's full tilt—it starts out like a party and then it turns mean on you. The intro to 'Discothèque' is beyond, it's very dizzy. Then 'Do You Feel Loved'—that's a bit yahoo—and 'Mofo.' Then 'If God Will Send His Angels.' That's sci-fi gospel, it's air, and it leads right into 'Staring at the Sun.'

" 'The Last Night on Earth' doesn't know what it is. With 'Gone,' the record peaks a bit. 'Miami' is followed by 'Playboy Mansion,' which is a hymn to trash. 'If You Wear That Velvet Dress'—I don't want to talk about that song too much, but let's just say it's haunted. It's all tangled up in ultraviolet.

"Finally there's 'Please' and 'Wake Up Dead Man.' We didn't really want to end with that, but you can't help it. It's an ending song."

Bono pauses for breath, but not for long. "Right up to the last month of making this record I had this feeling that it could go any way," he admits. "It could be so extraordinary, or such crap. We had the sense that we were trying to make the impossible happen. Can we be this? And we can." ●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HOLIDAY IN CAMBODIA

continued from page 91

Shooting.

Did you see things like that many more times?

Many times. Very often.

How were you feeling when you saw the dead generals?

Feeling sad.

When did you first hear the name Pol Pot? I asked.

The man tensed, gripping at his erms.

1980, month ten, day 13, he said. That day is the day they don't want to have Communist system. After that he hear the name Pol Pot from the lieutenant of the army.

So even in the Pol Pot time you never heard thet name? I exclaimed, experiencing a thrill of strangeness.

He never know Pol Pot then. At that time it was the secret time. And some persons bigger know that Pol Pot is the heed, but cannot speaking. He himself know only *Angkar.*

STATEMENT OF A WITNESS (FROM POL POT'S TRIAL IN ABSENTIA)

[The Khmer Rouge] edvised us to continue our wey to the South where Angker [the government] was to welcome us. At first, es I did not understend exectly what the word "Angker" meent, I wondered: Who is Angker? Where does he stey? How ere we to find him?...

...One evening, efter dinner, [my husband's friend] was taken away. Angkar, he was told, needed his services. Two weeks later...it was the turn of 24 other people, emong them my husbend.... [The villege chief] told me: "Don't worry, he'll be back within two days. Angker simply needs some informetion beceuse your husbend's friend hes denounced him." Days, months, end yeers heve pessed but up till now I heve not seen my husbend egein. Those who were teken ewey with him have not come back either.

"ONLY POLITICS"

And what did you think Angkar was—a person or an organization?

At that time, replied General X, if three persons keep in touch, eny three persons, we can call ourselves Angkar.

What did Angkar say about the dead generals you saw on the bridge?

Angkar say nothing, beceuse Angkar they do that themselves.

Did you ever kill people?

Never, he said, and I suspected that this was his first lie.

Do the K.R. still refer to themselves as Angkar?

After 1980 they cannot call themselves Angker. They stop Communist system. Right now they call themselves Country of the Army.

Were you sad?

After they stopped the Communist system, he was happy end hed some hope to change system for development, for the heppy life.

And do you think that Pol Pot was good or bad?

Pol Pot is good.

Why is he good?

The big ermy of Pol Pot never run, and they can go up end down from the mountain end stay in the forest to protect the people.

In other words, I thought, General X edmired Pol Pot because he believed that Pol Pot protected him from something still worse than Pol Pot.

In Phnom Penh I went to the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum and to the killing fields et Choeung Ek. And in those pleces they sey thet the Khmer Rouge killed more than a million people during the Pol Pot time. What do you think about that, true or false?

For his idea, 50 percent from Pol Pot, ten percent from disease, 30 percent not true, end ten percent from Vietnamese coming.

So Pol Pot killed maybe half a million people?

Something like that.

But you think that Pol Pot is a nice person?

Because not Pol Pot kill by himself, just Angkar.

Pol Pot didn't know.

Difficult to control Angkar. Pol Pot know, but only efterwerd, when elready too lete.

In your view, when is violence justified? When is it O.K. to kill people?

For himself, he want to kill the people if he do mistake like spy. For the big person, first he want to kill if make big mistake. For the small person, first he went to put him in prison and teach him. Then if small person does not become good, kill. If become good, then no problem.

Do you want to kill me, because I em en American, and Americans did the bad thing in Cambodia before?

At this question, General X did a very surprising thing. He clasped his hands and bowed in what Thais call a *wai,* e salutation end e remark of respect. —Thet meen he like you so much, said D., ewed. For himself, she transleted, he very heppy to meet you. For fighting it is another choice, only politics.

Ah, I thought. That was it. That was the answer. "Only politics." Indeed, thet's ell it was. Surely that was what Pol Pot would say. That's all it had been when they tricked the generals and shot them in cold blood, when they cut people's livers out end ete them before their eyes, when they smeshed women end children's heads in by the truckload end kicked their squirming bodies into the mass graves.

"BECAUSE WE KILL EACH OTHER"

The general's arms were folded again, his head wearily tilted. It had been an hour, and Mr. Gold gave me a long, cool look, apprising me of the fact that I'd elready received more than full value for my money.

Whet is the Khmer Rouge eim now? I asked.

Now we don't need fighting. We want to keep in touch with Whites to join the government.

If you succeed in that, how can you keep Angkar from coming back?

For his idea, he guarantee 100 percent, if K.R. keep in touch with Whites, never have Angkar anymore. He himself want finish K.R., but cannot ebandon small soldiers.

But Pol Pot is such e nice person, you seid. Don't you went Pol Pot to come back?

He think Pol Pot never come again.

If D. end I ere eble to meet Pol Pot, do you heve eny message for him?

Tell him please stop the war, because we kill each other, Cambodia against Cambodia.

The next day I was at the border again with D. and the police general. I looked across the frontier to Poipet, end then I looked across the street at the Thei immigration checkpoint where the usuel geggle of submissive Thai journelists sat waiting to be told the news (D. seid that while I'd been in Phnom Penh she'd called some journalist friends together for lunch and asked them if they had any leads on Pol Pot; they told her thet they could never even think of writing a story like that, because if they did they'd lose their jobs at the very least and probably much worse); end just then I heerd the dull sound of a big gun ten kilometers awey; the police general said that that was White ertillery; end I heerd another shot and then enother. ●

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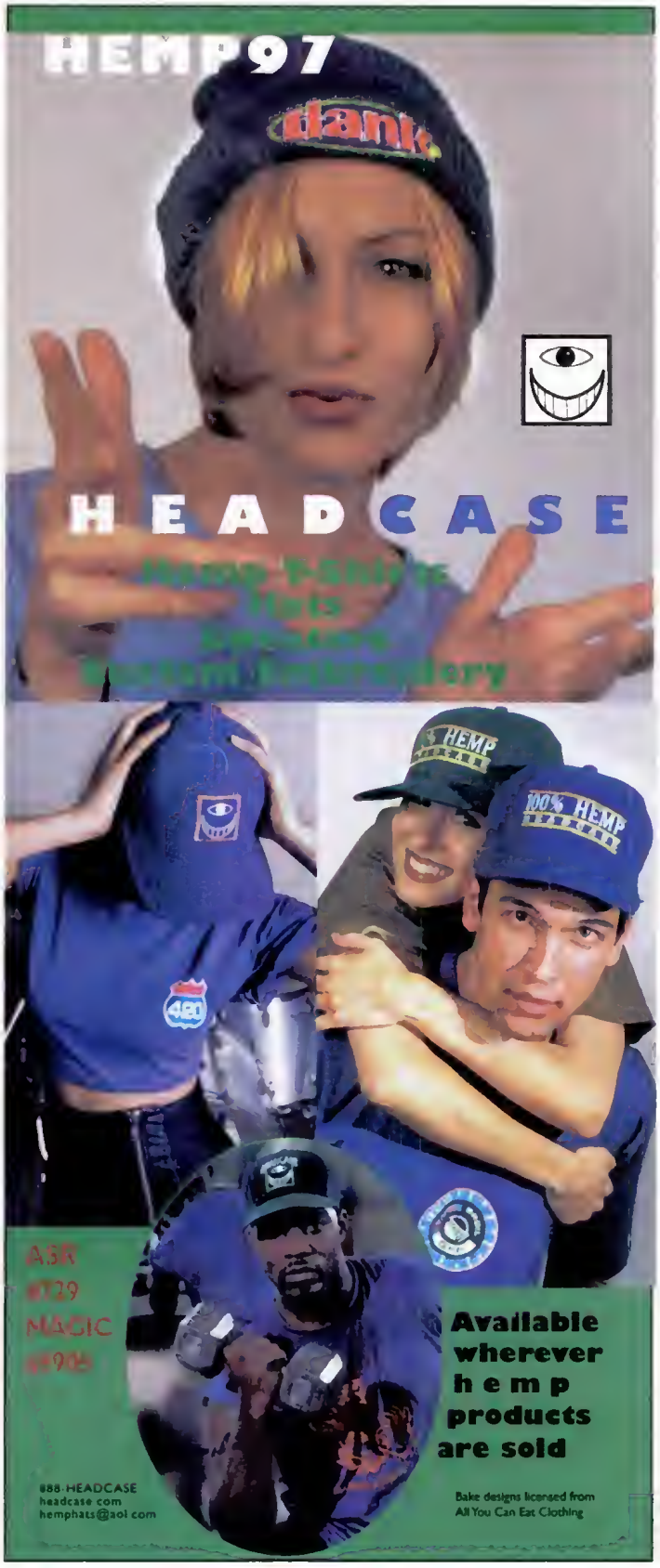

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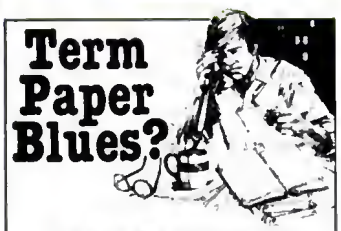

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Lesbo lovers	1 809 447 8582
Horny housewives	011 592 577 356
Int'l rates apply	18+ years

UNCENSORED ADULT CHAT

Dominatric queens	1 758 455 5607
All male review	1 809 447 8596
Blow blondes	011 232 91585
Coed sleaze	1 809 447 8583
Int'l rates apply	18+ years

XXX LIVE XXX Int'l rates apply, 18+yrs

Submissive sluts	011 592 577 353
Two way Tina	1 809 447 TINA
Kinky fantasies	011 592 577 361
Party line	1 664 410 2453
Gay playhouse	1 809 447 8597

SUCK SISTERS
1 664 410 2448
18+yrsInt'l rates apply

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All you want, and more
1 664 410 2449 int'l rates apply
1 809 455 447 8383 18+ yrs

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268-404-7322
Int'l L.D. only, no extra charges, 18+

The ButtMonkey Partyline
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Int'l L.D. only, no extra charges, 18+

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268-404-5075
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Man 2 Man	1-268-404-4797
Swingers	1-664-410-1400
Arizona High	1-520-718-5743
Las Vegas Party	1-702-748-7611

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Young Black Girls!	**1-800-406-5634**
Young Hot Sluts!	**1-800-328-9969**
Date/Party Anything Goes	**1-268-404-4939**

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concert information

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Code	Artist	Code	Artist	Code	Artist	Code	Artist
2231	AC/DC	3331	Def Leppard	5633	Lisa Loeb	7266	Rancid
2371	Aerosmith	3371	Depeche Mode	5484	Live	7332	RH Chili Peppers
6261	Aimee Mann	3871	Duran Duran	5651	Lollapalooza	7832	Rod Stewart
6673	Alanis Morissette	3242	Eagles	6275	Marilyn Manson	7651	Rolling Stones
2664	Alice Cooper	5641	Elton John	3841	Melissa Etheridge	7871	Rush
2541	Alice In Chains	2525	Eric Clapton	6354	Melvins	7872	Rusted Root
2325	Beck	3832	Everclear	6382	Metallica	7453	Silverchair
2382	Better Than Ezra	3451	Filter	6682	Motley Crue	7541	Skid Row
5632	Billy Joel	3663	Foo Fighters	6371	Natalie Merchant	7523	Slaughter
2561	Bjork	4461	Gin Blossoms	9682	Neil Young	7524	Slayer
2523	Black Crowes	4664	Goo Goo Dolls	6461	Nine Inch Nails	7621	Smashing Pumpkins
7341	Bob Seger	4737	Green Day	6471	Nirvana	7682	Soundgarden
2661	Bon Jovi	4861	Guns N' Roses	6276	Oasis	7722	Spacehog
7771	Bruce Springsteen	4651	Hole	6332	Offspring	7746	Spin Doctors
2321	Bryan Adams	4663	Hootie & the Blowfish	7321	Pearl Jam	7863	Stone Temple Pilots
2872	Bush	4631	Indigo Girls	7462	Pink Floyd	8321	Tears For Fears
2656	Collective Soul	4691	INXS	7641	Poison	8622	Toadies
2683	Counting Crows	5386	Joan Jett / Blackhearts	7671	Porno for Pyros	7381	Tom Petty
2723	Cranberries	6725	Joan Osborne	7731	Presidents of the USA	2667	Tori Amos
2671	The Cure	5472	KISS	7745	Primus	8221	U2
6283	Dave Matthews Band	5671	KORN	1832	Queensryche	8262	Van Halen
7681	David Lee Roth	5721	Lenny Kravitz	7363	R E M	6341	Vince Neil

PLUS...OVER 500 MORE! If your favorite group is not listed here, just press or say the numbers on your phone that contain the first 3 letters of the group, or artist's last name (i.e. BON Jovi = 266, Bryan ADAms = 232)

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GENIUS LESSONS

BY SEAN LANDERS

#10 "RADIO" IT'S THE DEAD OF WINTER AND I'M STUCK IN A TRAFFIC JAM ON I 91, RED BRAKE LIGHTS EXTEND INTO INFINITY. I HAVE 18 RADIO STATIONS ENTERED INTO MY TUNNER AND I'M RIFLING THROUGH THEM IN A VAIN ATTEMPT TO ACTUALLY LISTEN TO MUSIC. THIS OF COURSE IS NEXT TO IMPOSSIBLE SINCE EVERY POPULAR RADIO STATION SPENDS THE MAJORITY OF IT'S AIR TIME BROADCASTING SCREECHING COMMERCIALS THAT ATTEMPT TO BE LIKE "SATURDAY NIGHT LIVE" SKITS BUT ARE EVEN LESS FUNNY (WHICH IS NO SMALL FEAT). WHEN THE COMERCIAL CYCLE FINALLY ENDS I'M ASSAULTED BY THE D.J. WHO FOR SOME REASON BELIEVES THE LISTENERS WANT TO HEAR HIM WHINNY AND NEIGH. I DON'T KNOW WHERE THEY GET THESE GUYS, BUT I FIGURE IT MUST BE FROM SOME PLANET WHERE TESTICLES ARE UNIFORMLY AS LARGE AS GRAPEFRUITS AND INTELLIGENCE IS SUB-SIMIAN. EVEN THE PUBLIC AND COLLEGE RADIO STATIONS ARE FILLED LESS WITH MUSIC AND MORE WITH TALK, KNOW-IT-ALL HOSTS WHO FEEL A NEED TO JUSTIFY THE MONEY THEY SPENT ON THEIR MASTER'S DEGREE BY BLABBERING ON AND ON ABOUT THEIR DIM AREA OF EXPERTISE. HERE IS A MESSAGE TO ALL RADIO D.J.'S ACROSS AMERICA; SHUT UP! I STRONGLY SUGGEST THAT YOU ACTUALLY PLAY MUSIC. WHY DO YOU THINK PEOPLE SPEND HUNDREDS EVEN THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS ON STERIO EQUIPMENT? DO YOU REALLY THINK IT'S TO LISTEN TO YOU WAIL. PLAY THE MUSIC, SAY CLEARLY AND PRECISELY WHO THE ARTIST IS AND THE NAME OF THE ALBUM AND THEN GET OFF THE AIR. THE WORST IS WHEN THEY SING OVER THE LAST PORTION OF THE SONG, DO THEY ACTUALLY THINK SOMEONE WANTS TO HEAR THAT? IF A RADIO STATION IS GOING TO FEATURE A TALKING ANUS THEN THAT PROGRAM SHOULD BE BILLED AS SOMTHING LIKE "THE HOWARD STERN SHOW" OR "MUS", THAT WAY YOU KNOW WHAT YOU'RE IN FOR. MOST STATIONS WILL SAY "LESS TALK MORE ROCK" ONLY TO HURL ENDLESS COMMERCIALS AT YOU, THEN ON COMES TESTI-MAN TELLING YOU HOW YOU CAN WIN A HUNDRED TWO POINT THREE DOLLARS IF YOU'RE THE HUNDRED TWO POINT THIRD CALLER. OR HE'S GOT TICKETS TO THE SOLD OUT "BUSH" GIG AT THE VIRGIN SUPER STORE, AND THEN ADDS IN HIS LOWEST TESTICULAR VOICE "I'LL BE HOSTING THE EVENT, SO I WONT NEED MY TICKETS, BUT I'LL GIVE THEM TO THE FIRST CALLER WHO CAN TELL ME HOW MANY VENEREAL WARTS I HAVE ON THE HEAD OF MY PENIS". AND IF LISTENG TO THIS IDIOT JABBER IS'NT BAD ENOUGH NOW HE'S ACTUALLY GOING TO SUBJECT US TO BUS A BAND WHO'S SOLE PREMISE IS THAT THEY MIMIC THE SOUND OF NIRVANA, ONE WONDERS IF THIS BAND HAS NO SHAME, ALL THAN LEFT FOR THE LEAD SINGER TO DO IS... WELL, I SHOULD'NT SAY THAT. BY THIS POINT I'M SO DESPERATE FOR RELIEF I FURIOUSLY DIG THROUGH MY GLOVE COMPARTMENT PRAYING I'LL FIND A TAPE, ANY OLD TAPE WILL DO. I FIND A LINT COVERD TRIDENT SMEARD CASSETTE, IT'S ANCIENT AND I HAVE NO IDEA WHAT'S ON IT, I VAGUELY RECOGNIZE IT FROM COLLEGE AND GUESS THAT IT'S THE CRAMPS OR THE VIOLENT FEMMES OR MAYBE THE REPLACEMENTS. IT'S SO DIRTY AND FOULD THAT IT'LL CERTAINLY JAM MY DECK, BUT THIS IS A DESPERATE MOMENT AND I SLIDE IT INTO THE DECK ANY WAY, IT HISSES, CRACKLES AND POPS, AND THEN THE SONG BEGINS IT'S ALPHAVILLE'S "FOREVER YOUNG" (NOT ROD STEWARTS). THE SONG IS LIKE A FRIENDLY ANGEL LIFTING ME OUT OF MY SLOW MOVING HELL. I TURN IT UP AS LOUD AS IT CAN GO WITHOUT THE SPEAKERS DISTORTING AND I'M MOVED TO NEAR TEARS AT THE PERFECT TIMING OF THIS TOTALLY UNEXPECTED PLEASURE. FOR MUSIC FROM A TIME WHEN YOU WOULD'NT THINK TWICE ABOUT A GUY ROLLING UP HIS SLEEVES OF HIS LINEN JACKET, OR WEARING CAPEZIOS. THAT'S WHEN IT HIT ME, I HATE NEW WAVE, I HATE EVERYTHING. I'M ONE OF THOSE MISERABLE CREEPS WHO THINKS EVERYTHING SUCKS.

I MAKE THE "TSCH" SOUND AT THE DROP OF A HAT. DEAR GOD I HATE MYSELF.

YOUR FRIEND SEAN.

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